FROM THE
PERSONAL LIBRARY OF
JAMES BUELL MUNN
1890 – 1967

BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY

SHAKESPEARE'S

MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM.

SHAKESPEARE'S

MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM.

THE FIRST QUARTO,

1600:

A FAC-SIMILE IN PHOTO-LITHOGRAPHY,

BY

WILLIAM GRIGGS,

FOR 13 YEARS PHOTO-LITHOGRAPHER TO THE INDIA OFFICE.

WITH INTRODUCTION BY

J. W. EBSWORTH, M.A.,

EDITOR OF "THE 'DROLLERIES' OF THE RESTORATION;" "THE BAGFORD BALLADS;" "THE ROXBURGHE BALLADS," ETC.

LONDON:

W. GRIGGS, HANOVER STREET, PECKHAM, S.E.

1880.

DEDICATED

TO HIS GRACE

The Duke of Devonshire:

CHANCELLOR OF CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY:

BY THE EDITOR.

Munn
PR 2750
.C5
no. 3

[*Shakspere-Quarto Fac-similes, No.* 3.]

INTRODUCTION

TO THE PHOTO-LITHOGRAPH OF

FISHER'S QUARTO EDITION, 1600:

A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM.

§ 1. *The Two Quartos of* 1600.
§ 2. *Mentioned by Meres*, 1598.
§ 3. *The Date of the Comedy.*
§ 4. *Supposed allusion to Greene*, 1592.
§ 5. *Spenser's Faerie Queene*, 1596.
§ 6. *Pyramus and Thisbie*, 1584, *etc.*
§ 7. *North's Plutarch*, 1579: *Theseus.*
§ 8. *The Fairies: Oberon and Titania.*
§ 9. *The "Crew of Patches," "Bottom's Dream."*
§ 10. *Conclusion: The Three-fold Plot.*

§ 1. THE TWO QUARTOS OF 1600.

IN the Registers of the Stationers' Company, vol. C = 3, fol. 65 *verso*, is found the earliest known record of the publication in printed form of "A Midsummer Night's Dream:"—

[A.D. 1600.] 8 **Octobris.**

Thomas ffyssher Entred for his Copie vnder the handes of master RODES / and the Wardens, A booke called *A Mydsommer nightes Dreame* . . . . . vj[d] [1]

Students require absolute fidelity in the reproduction of such rare originals. We therefore offer them this volume without any tamper-

[1] Edward Arber's *Transcript of the Registers of the Company of Stationers*, &c., iii., 174. This entry undoubtedly refers to the Quarto here reproduced in its integrity from an exemplar in the possession of the Duke of Devonshire. A few pages deficient in the original (viz. 18, 19, 20, 21; 58, 59, 60, 61 = eight pp.) are supplied in the photo-lithograph from Mr. Huth's own copy. The Bodleian Library and the Capell Collection, in Trinity College, Cambridge, possess the same edition. There is also another perfect exemplar in the British Museum, Case 34, k. 29.

ing whatever. Even the mutilated head-lines are left as they were shorn by some reckless bookbinder. The crease in the paper of the title-page (causing omission of two letters, *a* and *h*) is a defect in the Devonshire copy. Of course, the other broken or imperfectly-inked letters, etc., are in *fac-simile* of the original.

For purposes of reference it is sufficient that *we number the lines of the Quarto*, in fours, on the inside margin; and also *mark the division of Acts*, which is given in the Folio, but not in either Quarto. We add a list of characters, on a separate page, preceding the title, from a later edition.

Like others of the early typographers and publishers, Thomas Fisher indulged himself with a pictorial rebus and verbal synonyme on his own name. As may be seen in our reproduction of the title-page, he gives a King-fisher or Halcyon, "Alcione," with the motto "Motos soleo componere fluctus."[1]

Another Quarto edition was issued, by James Roberts, bearing date of the same year, 1600; but of this publication no record is entered in the Stationers' Registers. For the Introduction to the photo-lithographic *fac-simile* of this other edition may well be reserved a consideration of the chief verbal differences between these two Quartos, and also the relation they bear to the first Folio of 1623; the editors whereof had certainly availed themselves of Roberts's printed copy, although they professed to have had access to some manuscript original, if we are to take their announcement literally.[2] At the best, they employed a playhouse copy, which was composed of Roberts's printed Quarto, with additional stage directions, etc., in manuscript. These statements are supported by proofs in our Introduction to the second Quarto.

[1] Fisher must have been proud of obtaining the favour of being allowed to print this play-book, his very earliest recorded publication, within a few months after gaining his freedom.

[2] Compare the address to the readers of the first Folio, 1623, signed by John Heminge and Henrie Condell: . . . "Where (before) you were abus'd with diuerſe ſtolne, and ſurreptitious copies, maimed, and deformed by the frauds and ſtealthes of iniurious impoſtors, that expos'd them: euen thoſe, are now offer'd to your view cur'd, and perfect of their limbes; and all the reſt, abſolute in their numbers, as he conceiu'd them . . . . . wee haue ſcarſe receiued from him a blot in his papers." (Sheet sign. A 3.)

§ 2. Mentioned by Meres, 1598.

Two years earlier, at least, the comedy was known and popular on the stage. Francis Meres, in the memorable list contained in his *Palladis Tamia: Wits Treasury; being the Second part of Wits Commonwealth*, September, 1598, fol. 281-2, mentions "Shakespeare among English is the most excellent . . . for the stage; for Comedy witnes . . . his *Midsummers nights dream*," etc. This is the earliest distinct reference to the play, which may have been several years before the public for anything yet shown to the contrary. It is the fifth comedy in the list of six; the others being almost certainly of earlier date than this.

§ 3. Date of the Comedy.

Among conjectural theories, one seemed plausibly to establish the date as immediately following the wet summer of 1594. Numerous are the contemporary accounts of the floods, the damaged fruit and endangered harvest of that year. Dr. Forman's Ashmolean MS., No. 384, gives such a description of the rainy season and the damage that ensued as might suffice anew for a meteorological diary of 1879. Stowe chronicles the same events, and the statement is copied into Penkethman's *Artachthos*, 1638. In the *Lectures on Jonah*, delivered at York in the same year, 1594, by the Rev. John King (afterwards D.D., 1601, and Bishop of London, 1611), are passages, often quoted, which refer to the unkind spring "by means of the abundance of rains that fell; our July hath been like to a February; our June even as an April;" and "such unseasonable weather and storms of rain among us, which if we will observe, and compare it with that which is past, we may say that the course of nature is very much inverted; our years are turned upside down; our summers are no summers; our harvests are no harvests; our seed-times are no seed-times; for a great space of time scant any day hath been seen that it hath not rained upon us; and the nights are like the days." (*Lectures upon Jonah*, delivered at York, in the year of our Lord 1594: by John King, afterwards Lord Bishop of London. Reprinted by

James Nichol. Edinburgh, 4to., 1864.) In the second Lecture he had said, and pointedly in reference to "the year of the Lord 1593, and 1595:"—"The months of the year have not yet gone about, wherein the Lord hath bowed the heavens, and come down amongst us with more tokens and earnests of his wrath intended, than the agedest man of our land is able to recount of so small a time. For say if ever the winds, since they blew one against the other, have been more common, and more tempestuous, as if the four ends of heaven had conspired to turn the foundations of the world upside down; thunders and lightnings, neither seasonable for the time, and withal most terrible, with such effects brought forth," &c. (*Ibid.*, p. 21.) We agree with Thomas Kenney in believing that "The detailed enumeration made by Titania, in Act ii. sc. 1 [our p. 14, line 84, to p. 15, line 113], of the elemental convulsions which [had] followed her quarrel with Oberon, seems to contain an unmistakable allusion to the unseasonable and disastrous weather with which we know that England had been visited during that year." (*Life and Genius of Shakespeare*, 1864, p. 175.) The Rev. Alexander Dyce harshly designated the supposition of any such intended allusion to the weather of 1594 as "ridiculous," but he also thus characterized "not less so" any specific identification of the mourning by the thrice-three Muses,

> "For the death
> Of learning, late deceast in beggary."
> (P. 53, lines 50, 51.)

§ 4. The Supposed Allusion to Greene, 1592.

Nevertheless, it is by no means improbable that Shakespeare did here refer to the blighted career and untimely death, in 1592, of that Robert Greene, who had made scurrilous allusion to his rival as "an absolute Johannes Fac-totum," and "in his owne conceit the onely Shake-scene in a countrie." (*Groatsworth of Wit*, p. 30.) It seems generally forgotten by book-learned critics, who are for the most part unfamiliar with the actual stage-management and the resources of dramatic authorship, that many a "telling" allusion to contemporary

events would be profitably foisted in (like a new verse on the day's occurrences in a "topical song") during the run of a drama, or on its revival.[1]

Therefore, even when we are able with precision to determine that some particular allusion must have referred to an event of ascertained date, we are not materially helped to a discovery of the original date of the work itself; only to the fact of it being not later than the date thus established. Oberon's description may have been intentionally appropriated to the wet summer of 1594 (and in such case it was written and spoken before the "fair harvest" in August, mentioned by Stowe, had partly compensated for the previous floods). But this by no means proves that the fairy comedy could not have been acted earlier *without that description;* that it was so acted, although possible, is far from probable.[2]

"The thrice-three Muses mourning for the death of Learning," etc., cannot have been an allusion to Spenser's "Tears of the Muses," 1591; for, we are expressly told, "That is some *Satire* keene and critical, Not sorting with a nuptial ceremony:" a description inapplicable to the Spenserian complaint. Spenser's death was not until January, 159$\frac{8}{9}$.

The supposed imitation in "Doctor Dodypoll," 1600—

[1] In most cases this interpolation would be what is called the actor's "gag;" but where the author happened to be in connection with the theatre, a shareholder and performer, close at hand, he would himself occasionally add fresh lines when deemed expedient. Thus Hamlet intended to insert "a speech of some dozen or sixteen lines," in the Gonzago play. Some passage similarly dangerous or seditious may have been interpolated in "Richard the Second," at the time of Essex's ill-starred tumult in 1600.

[2] It need not be deemed conclusive against the supposition of Robert Greene having been thus indicated, that his death (in September, 1592) was an event too far back to be remembered by the audience. Greene had secured many admirers, and, as J. O. Halliwell-Phillipps shows, his miserable death "was a subject of general conversation for several years, and a reference to the circumstance, though indistinctly expressed, would have been well understood in literary circles at the time it is supposed the comedy was produced." (Privately-printed *Memoranda on the Midsummer Night's Dream*, p. 20, 1879.) In confirmation of this statement we must remember that even so late as 1598 Greene's name was still employed as a popular spell to enforce attention, for John Dickenson thus uses it in more than the title of his "*Greene in Conceipt: new raised from the Graue to write the Tragique Historie of faire Valeria of London.*" This novel was probably of later date than the production of Shakespeare's comedy. It was reprinted in 1879 by Dr. Grosart, among his valuable "Occasional Issues."

"'Twas I that lead you through the painted meades,
Where the light fairies daunst upon the flowers,
Hanging on every leafe an orient pearle," etc.—

is of doubtful value in reference to date; although the comedy was mentioned, by Nash, in 1596: the language, moreover, may be deemed too loose and general to be cited as an imitation or parallel-passage.[1]

§ 5. Spenser's Faerie Queene, 1596.

A far more important clue is furnished by the ripe scholarship of J. O. Halliwell-Phillipps, in his valuable and most recent *Memoranda on the Midsummer Night's Dream*, 1879. It is but fair to this life-long student of Shakespearian literature to quote the passage entire, the more especially as the *Memoranda* are privately printed for a very limited circulation:—

"There seems to be a certainty that Shakespeare, in the composition of the *Midsummer Night's Dream*, had in one place a recollection of the sixth book of *The Faerie Queene*, published in 1596, for he all but literally quotes the following line from the eighth canto of that book,—'*Through hils and dales, through bushes and through breres.*' (*Faerie Queene*, ed. 1596, p. 460.) As the *Midsummer Night's Dream* was not printed until the year 1600, and it is impossible that Spenser could have been present at any representation of the comedy before he had written the sixth book of *The Faerie Queene*, it may fairly be concluded that Shakespeare's play was not composed at the earliest before the year 1596, in fact, not until some time after January the 20th, 1595-6, on which day the Second Part of *The Faerie Queene* was entered on the books of the Stationers' Company. The sixth book of that poem was probably written as early as 1592 or 1593, certainly in Ireland, and at some considerable time before the month of November, 1594, the date of one entry of publication of the *Amoretti*, in the eightieth sonnet of which it is distinctly alluded

[1] To Puck the Fairy says (p. 12, lines 10, 11):—
"I must goe seeke some dew droppes here,
And hang a pearle in euery couslippes eare."
So far as it proves anything, the resemblance in "Doctor Dodypoll" indicates that *Midsummer Night's Dream* was not later than 1596.

to as having been completed previously to the composition of the latter work." (*Memoranda*, pp. 6, 7.)

We admit the virtual identity of the passage quoted from Spenser, with Puck's speech (our p. 12, line 2, Act ii. sc. 1):

"Ouer hill, ouer dale, thorough bush, thorough brier."

If we could feel it to be certain that the Spenserian line (written before 1594) suggested the Shakespearian, the test would be decisive: to us it indicates anew the date 1594.

Malone attributed the date of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* to 1594; Dr. Nathan Drake to 1593; Professor Delius to 1595; Chalmers to 1598. Recently, attempts have been made to claim so early a date as 1590-91: which claim the present writer holds to be inadmissible, and in opposition to external evidence.[1] Fortunately, the garrulity of Meres has determined the latest possible date as being 1598. This leads us tolerably near to the real date: probably 1593-94, at earliest; and not later than 1596.[2]

§ 6. Pyramus and Thisbie, 1584, etc.

No material help in regard to the date of the comedy is afforded by consulting the possible sources of the Interlude. The story of the two lovers had for several years been popular, not only in direct translations of Ovid by Golding and others, but more especially in "A new Sonet of Pyramus and Thisbie: to the Tune of The Downeright Squier," beginning, "You Dames (I say) that climbe the mount

[1] We omit consideration of what are called "verse-tests." At present, the theories based on these are (in the opinion of scholars of established reputation, with whom we hold agreement,) often misleading. In passing, let it be remarked, only, that the *light-ending* or *weak-ending* lines are almost wholly absent; and so are the *run-on* lines. The continuity of rhyme, in many lines repeated, is remarkable in Titania's and Oberon's speeches, adding to their musical impressiveness.

[2] Two hitherto-unnoticed entries in the Stationers' Registers deserve attention, as indicating some connection with *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. To Thomas Creede (who published several of Shakespeare's plays, more or less irregularly) is entered, on the 14th of May, 1594, "a booke intituled the *Scottish story of JAMES the FOURTHE, slayne at Flodden, intermixed with a plesant Comedie presented by OBORON Kinge of Fayres*." Again (as probably helping to suggest by contrast the name of Shakespeare's own comedy, which must have been in his mind, if not in great part written), to Edward White is entered, on the 22nd of May, 1594, "a book entituled *a Wynters nightes pastime*." (Cf. *Transcript*, ii. 648, 650.)

of Helicon." It is by I. Thomson, and contained in Clement Robinson's *A Handefull of pleasant Delites; containing sundrie new Sonets and delectable Histories in diuers kindes of Meeter.* 1584. Than this there is scarcely a book of which clearer proof remains that it had been seen and was used by Shakespeare. An earlier edition of it was issued in 1565, but whether "Pyramus and Thisbie" be one of "the new additions of certain Songs to verie late deuised Notes," it would be difficult to prove. In any case, the one extant edition (a unique copy, and mutilated, sheet sign. B. vi. being defective,[1]) is of too early a date to guide us, having been issued before Shakespeare is believed to have left Stratford.[2]

§ 7. North's Plutarch, 1579: Theseus.

Howard Staunton repudiates the theory which assigned the groundwork of the fable to Chaucer's "Knight's Tale," declaring that "there is scarcely any resemblance whatever between Chaucer's

[1] The present Editor was fortunate enough to discover and identify a fragment (leaf D. 2) of the earlier edition in the Bagford Collection at the British Museum (Case 39 K. vol. i. p. 83), hitherto unknown: and to print it in the Ballad Society's *Bagford Ballads*, p. 43. In the Stationers' Registers is an entry to Rich. Iohnes of the very book, in 1564-5. The Shakespearian connection is indisputable. (*Ex. grat.* sheet sign. A. ii. *verso*, "Rosemarie is for remembrance," and "Fenel is for flatterers:" compare *Hamlet*, Act iv.) In this respect it is noteworthy that we find a silly blunder (on sheet sign. C. ii.), "At last they promised to meet at prime, by *Minus* well" (*sic*): which suggests the "*Ninnies* tomb" of Flute, as Thisbie of the Interlude.

[2] Long before Shakespeare's interlude, "a tedious briefe Scene of young *Pyramus* and his love *Thisbye:* very tragical mirth," there had been a similar entertainment offered to the press, and probably also on the stage. For we find an entry in the Stationers' Registers, at the beginning of the year between 22 July, 1567, and 22 July, 1568, "Recevyd of Rycharde Jonnes for his lycense for pryntinge of a boke intituled *ye tragecall comodye of DAMONDE and PETHYAS* . . . iiij^{d}." (See Arber's *Transcript*, 1875, i. 354.) And the phrase tickled the fancy of the public, for we find again, two years later, "Recevyd of John Alde for his lycense for pryntinge of an enterlude *a lamentable Tragedy full of pleasaunt myrth* . . . iiij^{d}." (*Ibid.* i. 400, for 22 July, 1569, to 22 July, 1570.) We are not aware that these entries have been hitherto cited in illustration. It may also here be noted that, near the same time, when he had been writing or meditating *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Shakespeare himself introduced an allusion into *The Merchant of Venice* (but see J. W. E.'s forthcoming Introduction to it), act v. sc. 1:—

> "In such a night
> Did *Thisbie* fearfully o'ertrip the dew,
> And saw the Lion's shadow ere himself,
> And ran dismay'd away."

tale and Shakespeare's play, beyond that of the scene in both being laid at the Court of Theseus." He admits that the character of "the Duke" is founded on the account in North's Translation of Plutarch;[1] but he somewhat exaggerates in declaring that, "beyond one or two passing allusions, there is no attempt to individualize either the man or the country." As to the country we may concede the point, for the haunted wood more resembles the Wier-Brake of Warwickshire than any grove near Athens. Local colouring was unthought of, so long as events and characters were found interesting. But in the stately dignity of Theseus, with his large-hearted acceptance of the efforts made to please him, and the half-expressed repugnance to unreal sentiment or rhapsody, such as befitted a man of action and success in war,[2] we recognize his individuality. The delineation of Theseus, as a piece of art, is complete in its strength and beauty; although it is almost overlooked in any popular estimate of the wonderful fairy mythology. The lore of pedants[3] could never have given to us this heroic figure—one whose every word still recalls, like the analogous sculpture by Phidias, that period of Grecian antiquity when gods walked the earth with man as with a friend. The nobility of Theseus is of a kind that none but a truly great mind could have conceived: it is nobility in repose. We have no opportunity of seeing him in his

[1] For which see Reeves and Turner's excellent *Shakespeare's Library*, second edition (being enlarged from J. P. Collier's, of 1841), 1875, vol. i. pp. 7 to 71. The full title of North's translation is, *The Lives of the noble* Grecians *and* Romanes, *compared together by that graue learned Philosopher and Historiographer*, Plutarke *of* Chæronea. . . . By Thomas North. Imprinted at London by Thomas Vautroullier, dwelling in the Black Friers by Ludgate. 1579. In folio, 595 leaves. From this work certain names were directly borrowed for *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, particularly, 1, *Ægles* (from pp. 28, 41); 2, *Perigouna*, the daughter of Sinnis (p. 15); 3, *Ægeus*, father of Theseus. These we find in the present Fisher's Quarto, printed or misprinted, as, 1, *Eagles* (intended for *Ægle*, which, moreover, ought to have been *italicized*, on p. 14, line 75); 2, *Perigenia* (on same page, line 74); and, 3, a different *Egeus* (Acts i. and v.). There are also *Antiopa*, *Hyppolita* (in North, as the same person: but in Shakespeare as distinct women), etc. The preceding offer a stronger clue.

[2] Compare *Julius Cæsar*, Act iv., sc. 3: "What should the wars do with these jigging fools?"

[3] We have little need to disturb ourselves concerning anachronisms and incongruities, although we find Athenian Theseus declare "Saint Valentine is past" (p. 47); and Titania accuse Oberon of having been disguised as Corin, conversing "love to amorous Phillida." Dido, "the Carthage Queen," and Æneas (p. 7) belong to a later date than Theseus, whom Chaucer also had called a "Duke." These are trifles.

early enterprises as a redressor of wrongs and seeker after adventures. Although he tells his queen,

> "Hippolita, I wooed thee with my sword,
> And won thy love, doing thee injury,"

the struggle with her Amazons is ended before he appears in view; his battle with the Centaurs is only incidentally referred to (p. 52), "in glory of my kinsman Hercules." There is no rebellious strife in the Athenian city to demand display of energy. Yet we feel, in his every word and movement, that here is indeed a man "equal to either fortune:" one whom prosperity cannot dazzle, or adversity humiliate and sour. Noteworthy is it how thoroughly Shakespeare portrays such heroes as this (and no dramatist can rise to lofty heights unless there be in himself true dignity)—the majestic grace of his speech, the genial warmth of sympathy with inferiors, entering without ostentation into their feelings, receiving their lame endeavours with kindly humour, and thus making complete what they imperfectly perform:

> "And what poor duty cannot do
> Noble respect takes it in might, not merit."

He is unwilling to disappoint these

> "hard-handed men that work in Athens here,
> Who never laboured in their minds till now,
> And now have toiled their unbreath'd memories
> With this same play against his nuptials."

This acceptance is evidently from consideration for "their intents, extremely stretch'd, and conned with cruel pain to do him service," since he answers—

> "I will hear this play,
> For never any thing can be amiss
> When simpleness and duty tender it."

Again, afterwards, in reply to Hippolita's complaint that the dramatic interlude is "the silliest stuff" she ever heard, he reminds her—as an apology for any such shortcomings—"The best in this kind are but shadows: and the worst are no worse, if imagination amend

them."[1] But with all this willingness to accept such a "palpable gross play," his more keen delight is in the stirring chase, with his Amazonian bride, and his hounds that "are bred out of the Spartan kind: Slow in pursuit, but match'd in mouth like bells, each under each; a cry more tuneable was never halloed to, nor cheer'd with horn in Crete, in Sparta, nor in Thessaly." And this not only from love for the chase itself, but also to ascend

> "The mountain's top,
> And mark the musical confusion
> Of hounds and echo in conjunction."

From him we gain that most lovely contrast between the wedded wife and Diana's chaste votary,

> "In shady cloister mew'd,
> To live a barren Sister all her life,
> Chaunting faint hymns to the cold fruitless moon.
> Thrice blessed they, that master so their blood,
> To undergo such maiden pilgrimage;
> But *earthlier happy* is the rose distill'd,
> Than that which, withering on the virgin thorn,
> Grows, lives, and dies in single blessedness."[2]

From Theseus also comes the magnificent passage, as philosophically exact as it is poetically beautiful, descriptive of Imagination; gaining additional value from the position which it occupies, and from the character of him who utters it.

Even here, elevated to a throne, unchallenged in dignity, victor in struggles that were soon to be accounted mythical; after all the vast experience of his youth, familiarized by converse with beings of superhuman might and loveliness, Theseus appears not to be conscious of his own superiority to ordinary men, or that near to him are working

[1] It will not be without service to contrast the unkind mockery and persistent humiliation of the actors who personate the Nine Worthies in *Love's Labour's Lost*—probably an earlier play—with the raillery that greets the far more ridiculous exhibition of *Pyramus and Thisbie*. Well may Holofernes make remonstrance: "This is not generous; not gentle; not humble."

[2] A picture elaborated, later, in the Isabella of *Measure for Measure*. As with Sir Walter Scott's Catherine, *The Fair Maid of Perth*, the intention of the author had probably been to preserve the virginal chastity of the heroine unblemished until death. In either case, her marriage is a concession made to popular prejudice, weakening the force of the character, and thus injurious.

unseen those spiritual agencies that influence mankind. His poetry of thought and of expression is but the common air that he breathes. To him there is forgetfulness of mere self, his deeds appearing nowise marvellous to one who, from an inner world, surveys the outer sphere of action. Despite all that he has seen, he is no Visionary. Like a commentary on the whole drama of this *Midsummer Night's Dream*, and on the creative power of Shakespeare's own imagination, as beheld and restrained by practical wisdom, flow his words:—

> "*I never may believe*
> *These antique fables, nor these fairy toys:*
> Lovers and madmen have such seething brains,
> Such shaping fantasies, that apprehend
> More than cool reason ever comprehends.
> The Lunatic, the Lover, and the Poet,
> Are of Imagination all compact:
> One sees more devils than vast Hell can hold;
> That is the Madman: the Lover, all as frantic,
> Sees Helen's beauty in a brow of Egypt:
> The Poet's eye, in a fine phrensy rolling,
> Doth glance from heaven to earth, from earth to heaven;
> And, as Imagination bodies forth
> The forms of things unknown, the Poet's pen
> Turns them to shape, and gives to airy nothing
> A local habitation and a name."

§ 8. The Fairies: Oberon and Titania.

Although into the stately presence of Theseus the fairies enter not, visibly, they love and revere him; as they mention during the quarrel between Oberon and Titania: thus their latest employment is to hallow his nuptial dwelling. Over the more youthful pairs of lovers their spells are potent, at first to perplex, and afterwards to reunite them. But it is upon the clowns—the men described as

> "A crew of Patches, rude mechanicals,
> That work for bread upon Athenian stalls,
> Who meet together to rehearse a play
> Intended for great Theseus' nuptial day"—

that the elvish Puck, that lob of spirits,[1] most freely exercises his mis-

[1] "Farewell, thou Lobbe of spirits." (P. 12.)
"Then lies him down, the Lubber-fiend."—Milton's *L'Allegro*, 110.
"Lob lye-by-the-fire."—*Knight of the Burning Pestle*, Act iii. sc. 1.

chievous mirth. He confesses his belief, "What fools these mortals be!" The gambols of these tiny ministrants may well be regarded as the most perfect poem of its class that has ever appeared.[1] The lyrical melodiousness, and the profusion of floral or starry imagery never grow wearisome. They yield a clear, although a glowing revelation of the fairies' temperament. We see their sportive jealousies and fantastic vengeances; their gatherings on "the beached margent of the sea, to dance their ringlets to the whistling winds;" their drowsiness on banks of thyme, "o'er-canopied with sweet musk-roses and with eglantine;" their whimsical horror of intrusion from thorny hedgehogs, newts and blind-worms, spiders, snails, and beetles; their love of "music that brings sleep," and of the moonlit glades; their restless obligation to "trip after the moon's shade," "following darkness as a dream." We see the rollicking mirthfulness of Robin Goodfellow, to whom "things most pleasant be that befal preposterously."[2]

Amid this revelling in fancy there is a poetical completeness far beyond the requirements of any stage-effect. In our own time, at theatres, we may find the dramatic illusion heightened with set scenes, coloured lights and transparencies, the witcheries of graceful forms, fantastic costumes; and the loveliest melodies of Mendelssohn's

[1] Malone and, recently, J. O. Halliwell-Phillipps and W. C. Hazlitt, have shown that Michael Drayton's *Nymphidia* cannot be regarded as having in any way suggested the drama; for the *Nymphidia* was not only never printed until 1627, but is indicated as having been among the later poems of its author. See Malone's *Shakespeare*, edition 1821, v. 206; the Percy Society *Illustrations of Fairy Mythology*, 1845; and Reeves and Turner's *Fairy Tales illustrating Shakespeare*, 1875, p. 239, where the *Nymphidia* is reprinted complete. Also, the Robin Goodfellow ballad, attributed by Peck to Ben Jonson, "From Oberon, in fairyland," Roxb. Coll., i. 230; or *Roxburghe Ballads*, ii. 81.

[2] Commend we to the notice of all students a suggestive little volume on "*Shakespeare's Puck, and his Folklore*, illustrated from the Superstitions of All Nations:" By William Bell, Phil. Doct., 1852. In a forthcoming volume of the Ballad Society's reprint, *The Roxburghe Ballads*, the curious woodcuts of Robin Goodfellow will be given in *fac-simile* to Roxb. Coll., ii. 145. Professor Daniel Wilson's *Caliban: the Missing Link, and A Midsummer Night's Dream*, 1873, is one of the most valuable contributions to Shakespearian criticism. The name of *Oberon*, "the dwarfe king of fayryes," had already been made a household word by having appeared in the popular romance of *Huon of Bourdeaux*, a translation of which, by Lord Berners, had appeared about 1558. *Oberon* is guessed to be simply an adaptation of the original *Elberich*, or *Albrich*. The name Titania was borrowed from one of the synonymes of Diana, to whom it is applied by Ovid.

genius, to enhance the charm. But beyond all these additional adornments, giving pleasure to the eye and to the ear, remain unapproachable for realization that minuteness, that almost intangible evanescence, which belong to the fairy people of Shakespeare. Puck is native to our own folks-lore, although trace of him is found elsewhere. But Shakespeare, by several allusions, had carefully prepared us for welcoming the tiny monarchs as visitors from distant regions. Oberon has newly "Come from the farthest steppe of *India*," and Titania's favourite little changeling, the cause of strife, has been brought from his mother's land, where she had gossipt "in the spiced *Indian* air by night." These words, like Puck's boast, "I'll put a girdle round about the earth in forty minutes," or "I go, I go, swifter than arrow from the *Tartar's* bow," increase the impression of their swift travel and wide experiences; for although wanderers and foreign visitants, they are at home in every land, here as elsewhere. Thus the well-understood description of Queen Elizabeth,[1] "the imperiall Votress," "a fair Vestal, throned *in the West*," whom "young Cupid's fiery shaft" could not transpierce (p. 16), would inevitably bring back to the audience the remembrance that they were supposed to be at a distance from the England of their own time. Beyond these hints of remoteness, and a few antique names, disguise was scarcely attempted, to present the Athens of two thousand years ago.

§ 9. The "Crew of Patches:" "Bottom's Dream."

From the first, no doubt, the world welcomed the genuine humour of contrasting and intermingling with the fairy sprites these "hempen home-spuns" Peter Quince, the carpenter, manager, and Prologizer; Flute, the bellows-mender, who plays Thisbe, although he has a beard

[1] We attach no weight whatever to Warburton's supposition that by the "Mermaid on a Dolphin's back" Shakespeare glanced at Elizabeth's rival, Mary Queen of Scots. She was judicially murdered in 1587, and we may be sure that if the poet could have possibly descended to insult her, long after death, the attack would have been made as self-evident as was the flattering tribute to Elizabeth. It is one of the idle crotchets of those who are incapable of understanding true poetry. Thus attempts have been made to identify every character in *Hamlet* as portraits of Sir Philip Sidney, Essex, &c.

coming, but may do it in a mask; Starveling, a tailor of melancholy anticipations, who loses temper when gibed at as the "Man in the Moon;" Snug, the joiner, who is slow of study, and methodical in all that he does or asks—an orderly man, and well to be depended on in other matters than the Lion's part, "which is nothing but roaring;" Snout, the tinker, who enacts Wall in public, and is generally content to chime in with suggestions of others, being unobtrusive by nature in private life. But in all circles is Bully Bottom the favourite.[1] Being a weaver by trade, thence comes his dictatorial habit; for your weaver is a contemplative man, a politician, and abstruse inquirer: he thinks much at his loom, as though it were that of Destiny, and, when he emerges from the stronghold of his treddles, he sometimes forgets that the sequences of his deductions and dogmas are not so logical as they had appeared. He is indisposed to remain hidden in the background. He likes to play first fiddle in all societies, does Bottom: he would willingly perform the Lover and the Tyrant; also Thisbe and the Lion. When his time comes, he will summon Peaseblossom as authoritatively as he had ordered his Athenian comrades; and will volunteer a special answer, in contradiction of Theseus himself, concerning Thisbe's cue, and, again, regarding the Epilogue. Bottom is self-consistent throughout. In him is exemplified the great truth that no fairyland enchantment of dreams, or love itself, can alter the inherent nature of a full-grown man (as Fielding declared concerning drunkenness, in *Tom Jones*); at most it intensifies, and develops what was latent. He is equally full of ignorant assumption

[1] It is worth noting, as it proves the continued popularity of Bully Bottom among readers and old theatre-lovers, that during the Cromwellian interregnum, whilst all stage-plays were prohibited, Francis Kirkman and Robert Cox maintained the performance of "The merry conceited Humors of Bottom the Weaver; as it hath been often publikely acted by some of his Majesties Comedians, and lately privately presented by several apprentices for their harmless recreation, with great applause." This was printed in 1661; reprinted in Kirkman's "*The Wits: or, Sport upon Sport. In Selected Pieces of DROLLERY.* 2nd Part. 1672." With Frontispiece, representing the Red Bull during performance of sundry Drolls. We need attach little weight to the opinion of Samuel Pepys, 29th September, 1662, that the *Midsummer Night's Dream* appeared to him "the most insipid ridiculous play that ever I saw in my life" (*Diary*, best edition, 1876, ii. 51); for the Secretary's critical judgment does him little credit in regard to poetry. What Hamlet says of Polonius (falsely, it appears,) is tolerably true of Pepys: "He's for a jig, or a tale of bawdry, or he sleeps."

when Titania proffers music or affection, as he had been in his self-estimates of ability before his transformation. Had he not really been "the shallowest thick-skin of that barren sort," we might have cherished the idea of his career becoming thereafter dignified by a remembrance of the fairy realm into which he, and he alone, had been for awhile admitted;[1] especially as we have, in our own possession, the original Greek ballad which Peter Quince was to have written thereon. But the memory of his Ass's ears was the only perennial bequest of his Midsummer Night's Dream.

§ 10. Conclusion: The Three-fold Plot.

Simple though it appears, when acted, the interweaving of the three-fold plot might have tasked the ingenuity of any playwright. The fairies were to be kept quite distinct from influencing Theseus, his Amazonian bride, and their Court; yet it was specially to grace the nuptials that Oberon had journeyed so far, and the fairy benediction on the wedding-couch concludes the action of the play. The entanglements and misconceptions of the two pairs of lovers were to be caused by Puck and his enchantments of the magic juice; yet after all errors are happily dispersed, and the four friends made happy,—

> "When they next wake, all this derision
> Shall seem a dream and fruitless vision:" (p. 41.)
>
> . . . "And think no more of this night's accidents,
> But as the fierce vexation of a dream." (p. 45.)

Even thus it befalls. At first they believe "That yet we sleep, we dream;" and afterwards declare, "Let's follow him; And by the way, let us recount our dreams." Lastly, of the Athenian clowns, the handicraftsmen, none behold the fairy crew save only Bottom, the connecting-link, since fate will have it so, between the mortals and

[1] But see, in exemplification of this, Allan Park Paton's *Web of Life*, 1858, p. 261. The transformation is poetically conceived, and skilfully detailed; yet, after all, it is merely of modern false sentiment, opposed to the steadfastness of character that is shown by Shakespeare. We cannot gather figs from thistles: Bottom remains Bottom.

the ethereal company. Even while undergoing the enchantment he had confounded his own identity: he had longed for dry oats, a peck of provender, a handful or two of dried peas, a pottle of hay, "good hay, sweet hay, hath no fellow!" His long ears tickle him: "I must to the barber's; for methinks I am marvellous hairy about the face." But when he awakes he feels, "I have had a most rare vision. I have had a dream!"

No one need puzzle over the confused chronology of the drama. The action includes only three days and nights, dramatically; although we are told of four days to intervene between opening words and nuptial hour.[1] In the old drama, without change of scene, *without a marked distinction of the Acts* (such as we now recognize, both in printed books and at our theatres), there was seldom, if ever, a remembrance forced on the spectator of exact length of time. It was deemed sufficient if some conception arose of an extended duration —much beyond the real flight of minutes. For this the poet gave his hint. He found his audience apt, and far too wise to spoil enjoyment by labouring to detect his art. On the contrary, as Wordsworth writes, "*We* murder to dissect." As Bully Bottom says,

"Man is but an ass, if he will go about to expound this dream."

Mr. J. O. Halliwell-Phillipps declares:[2] "What is absurdly termed æsthetic criticism is more out of place on this comedy than perhaps on any other of Shakespeare's plays. It deadens the 'native wood-notes wild,' that every reader of taste would desire to be left to their own influences. The *Midsummer Night's Dream* is too exquisite a composition to be dulled by the infliction of philosophical analysis."

[1] The flight of the lovers, and the rehearsal of the Interlude, take place on the night of the second day: the three weddings fall on the next night, "Tomorrow midnight." Thus we have (Act i.) part of a first day; (Acts ii., iii., iv.) the night of a second day; running on into (Act v.) the morning, noon, and night of a third day.

[2] That J. O. Halliwell-Phillipps did not intend by his words to deprecate all explanatory or introductory remarks on *A Midsummer Night's Dream* is proved conclusively by his own excellent labours (beyond those of all other men, in this department,) connected with the Fairy Mythology. At best, it is a thankless office to write Introductions, so long as they are exposed to captious and malicious criticism, from those who are intolerant of all opinions except their own.

(*Memoranda*, p. 13.) Nevertheless, we criticize, for this our age is perverted from simple tastes, and not only demands the "finger-post criticism," but listens to the perverse misdirection of so-called scientific anatomists. We accept thankfully the glowing summary: "Of the lyric or the prosaic part, the counterchange of loves and laughters, of fancy fine as air and imagination high as heaven, what need can there be for any one to shame himself by the helpless attempt to say one word not utterly unworthy?" We trust that blame attaches not to those among us who dare speak at all on the subject, whilst admitting that no pen can fitly celebrate the inexhaustible beauties of *A Midsummer Night's Dream.*

J. Woodfall Ebsworth.

Molash Vicarage,
by Ashford, Kent.

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

[The two Quarto editions and the four Folio editions have no list of characters. Rowe first added one, in 1709.]

THESEUS, *Duke of* Athens.
EGEUS, an Athenian *Lord*, *Father of* Hermia.
LYSANDER, DEMETRIUS, } *in love with* Hermia.
PHILOSTRATE, *Master of the Revels to* Theseus.
QUINCE, *a Carpenter;*
SNUG, *a Joiner;*
BOTTOM, *a Weaver;*
FLUTE, *a Bellows-mender;*
SNOUT, *a Tinker;*
STARVELING, *a Tailor;* } *Artizans of* Athens.
HIPPOLYTA, *Queen of the* Amazons, *betrothed to* Theseus.
HERMIA, *daughter of* Egeus, *in love with* Lysander.
HELENA, *in love with* Demetrius.

OBERON, *King of the Fairies.*
TITANIA, *Queen of the Fairies.*
PUCK, or ROBIN-GOODFELLOW, *a Fairy.*
PEAS-BLOSSOM,
COBWEB,
MOTH,
MUSTARD-SEED, } *Fairies.*

PYRAMUS,
THISBE,
WALL,
MOONSHINE,
LION, } *Characters in the Interlude, performed by the Clowns.*

Other Fairies attendant on Oberon *and* Titania.

Attendants on Theseus *and* Hippolyta.

SCENE varies, from the Palace of *Theseus* at *Athens*, and *Quince's* house, to a Wood in the neighbourhood.

A Midſommer nights dreame.

As it hath beene ſundry times publickely *acted, by the Right* honourable, the Lord Chamberlaine his *ſeruants.*

Written by William Shakeſpeare.

¶ Imprinted at London, for *Thomas Fiſher*, and are to be ſoulde at his ſhoppe, at the Signe of the White Hart, in *Fleeteſtreete*. 1600.

A MIDSOMMER NIGHTS DREAME.

Qo.
Sc i.

Enter Theſeus, Hippolita, *with others.*

Theſeus.

1 NOw faire *Hippolita*, our nuptiall hower
Draws on apaſe: fower happy daies bring in
4 An other Moone: but oh, me thinks, how ſlow
This old Moone waues! She lingers my deſires,
Like to a Stepdame, or a dowager,
Long withering out a yong mans reuenewe.
Hip. Fower daies will quickly ſteepe themſelues in night:
8 Fower nights will quickly dreame away the time:
And then the Moone, like to a ſiluer bowe,
Now bent in heauen, ſhall beholde the night
Of our ſolemnities.
12 *The.* Goe *Philoſtrate*,
Stirre vp the *Athenian* youth to merriments,
Awake the peart and nimble ſpirit of mirth,
Turne melancholy foorth to funerals:
16 The pale companion is not for our pomp.
Hyppolita, I woo'd thee with my ſword,
And wonne thy loue, doing thee iniuries:
But I will wed thee in another key,
20 With pompe, with triumph, and with reueling.

Enter Egeus *and his daughter* Hermia, *and* Lyſander *and* Helena, *and* Demetrius.

Ege. Happy be *Theſeus*, our renowned duke.
The. Thankes good *Egeus*. What's the newes with thee
Ege. Full of vexation, come I, with complaint

A Midſommer nights dreame.

Againſt my childe, my daughter *Hermia*,
Stand forth Demetrius.
My noble Lord,
This man hath my conſent to marry her,
Stand forth Liſander.
And my gratious Duke,
This man hath bewitcht the boſome of my childe.
Thou, thou *Lyſander*, thou haſt giuen her rimes,
And interchang'd loue tokens with my childe:
Thou haſt, by moone-light, at her windowe ſung,
With faining voice, verſes of faining loue,
And ſtolne the impreſſion of her phantaſie:
With braceletsof thy haire, rings, gawdes, conceites,
Knackes, trifles, noſegaies, ſweete meates (meſſengers
Of ſtrong preuailement in vnhardened youth)
With cunning haſt thou filcht my daughters heart,
Turnd her obedience (which is due to mee)
To ſtubborne harſhneſſe. And, my gratious Duke,
Be it ſo, ſhe will not here, before your Grace,
Conſent to marry with *Demetrius*.
I beg the auncient priuiledge of *Athens*:
As ſhe is mine, I may diſpoſe of her:
Which ſhall be, either to this gentleman,
Or to her death: according to our lawe,
Immediatly prouided, in that caſe,
The. What ſay you, *Hermia*? Be aduiſ'd, faire maid.
To you, your father ſhould be as a God:
One that compoſ'd your beauties: yea and one,
To whome you are but as a forme in wax,
By him imprinted, and within his power,
To leaue the figure, or disfigure it:
Demetrius is a worthy gentleman.
Her. So is *Liſander*. *The.* In himſelfe he is:
But in this kinde, wanting your fathers voice,
The other muſt be held the worthier.

Her.

Her. I would my father lookt but with my eyes.
The. Rather your eyes muſt, with his iudgement, looke,
Her. I doe intreat your grace, to pardon mee.
I know not by what power, I am made bould;
Nor how it may concerne my modeſty,
In ſuch a preſence, here to plead my thoughts:
But I beſeech your Grace, that I may knowe
The worſt that may befall mee in this caſe,
If I refuſe to wed *Demetrius.*
The. Either to dy the death, or to abiure,
For euer, the ſociety of men.
Therefore, faire *Hermia*, queſtion your deſires,
Knowe of your youth, examine well your blood,
Whether (if you yeelde not to your fathers choyce)
You can endure the liuery of a Nunne,
For aye to be in ſhady cloyſter, mew'd
To liue a barraine ſiſter all your life,
Chaunting faint hymnes, to the colde fruitleſſe Moone.
Thriſe bleſſed they, that maſter ſo there bloode,
To vndergoe ſuch maiden pilgrimage:
But earthlyer happy is the roſe diſtild,
Then that, which, withering on the virgin thorne,
Growes, liues, and dies, in ſingle bleſſednesse.
Her, So will I growe, ſo liue, ſo die my Lord.
Ere I will yield my virgin Patent, vp
Vnto his Lordſhippe, whoſe vnwiſhed yoake
My ſoule conſents not to giue ſouerainty.
The. Take time to pawſe, and by the next newe moone,
The ſealing day, betwixt my loue and mee,
For euerlaſting bond of fellowſhippe,
Vpon that day either prepare to dye,
For diſobedience to your fathers will,
Or elſe to wed *Demetrius*, as he would,
Or on *Dianaes* altar to proteſt,
For aye, auſteritie and ſingle life.

Deme. Relent, ſweete *Hermia*, and, *Lyſander*, yeeld
Thy crazed title to my certaine right.
Lyſ. You haue her fathers loue, *Demetrius*:
Let me haue *Hermias*: doe you marry him,
Egeus. Scornefull *Lyſander*, true, he hath my loue:
And what is mine, my loue ſhall render him.
And ſhe is mine, and all my right of her
I doe eſtate vnto *Demetrius*.
Lyſand. I am my Lord, as well deriu'd as hee,
As well poſſeſt: my loue is more than his:
My fortunes euery way as fairely rankt
(If not with vantage) as *Demetrius*:
And (which is more then all theſe boaſtes can be)
I am belou'd of beautious *Hermia*.
Why ſhould not I then proſecute my right?
Demetrius, Ile auouch it to his heade,
Made loue to *Nedars* daughter, *Helena*,
And won her ſoule: and ſhe (ſweete Ladie) dotes,
Deuoutly dotes, dotes in Idolatry,
Vpon this ſpotted and inconſtant man.
The. I muſt confeſſe, that I haue heard ſo much;
And, with *Demetrius*, thought to haue ſpoke thereof;
But, being ouer full of ſelfe affaires,
My minde did looſe it. But *Demetrius* come,
And come *Egeus*, you ſhall goe with mee:
I haue ſome priuate ſchooling for you both.
For you, faire *Hermia*, looke you arme your ſelfe,
To fit your fancies, to your fathers will;
Or elſe, the Law of *Athens* yeelds you vp
(Which by no meanes we may extenuate)
To death, or to a vowe of ſingle life,
Come my *Hyppolita*: what cheare my loue?
Demetrius and *Egeu.* goe along:
I muſt employ you in ſome buſineſſe,
Againſt our nuptiall, and conferre with you

Of

Of ſome thing, nerely that concernes your ſelues.
Ege. With duety and deſire, we follow you, *Exeunt.*
Lyſand. How now my loue? Why is your cheeke ſo pale?
How chance the roſes there doe fade ſo faſt?
Her. Belike, for want of raine: which I could well
Beteeme them, from the tempeſt of my eyes.
Lif. Eigh me: for aught that I could euer reade,
Could euer here by tale or hiſtory,
The courſe of true loue neuer did runne ſmoothe;
But either it was different in bloud;
Her. O croſſe! too high to be inthrald to loue.
Lif. Or elſe miſgraffed, in reſpect of yeares;
Her. O ſpight! too olde to be ingag'd to young.
Lif. Or elſe, it ſtoode vpon the choyce of friends;
Her. O hell, to chooſe loue by anothers eyes!
Lyſ. Or, if there were a ſympathy in choyce,
Warre, death or ſickneſſe, did lay ſiege to it;
Making it momentany, as a ſound,
Swift, as a ſhadowe; ſhort, as any dreame;
Briefe, as the lightning in the collied night,
That (in a ſpleene) vnfolds both heauen and earth;
And, ere a man hath power to ſay, beholde,
The iawes of darkeneſſe do deuoure it vp:
So quicke bright things come to confuſion.
Her. If then true louers haue bin euer croſt,
It ſtands as an edict, in deſtiny:
Then let vs teach our triall patience:
Becauſe it is a cuſtomary croſſe,
As dewe to loue, as thoughts, and dreames, and ſighes,
Wiſhes, and teares; poore Fancies followers.
Lyſ. A good perſwaſion: therefore heare mee, *Hermia:*
I haue a widowe aunt, a dowager,
Of great reuenew, and ſhe hath no childe:
From *Athens* is her houſe remote, ſeauen leagues:
And ſhe reſpectes mee, as her only ſonne:

There, gentle *Hermia*, may I marry thee:
And to that place, the sharpe *Athenian* law
Can not pursue vs. If thou loues mee, then
Steale forth thy fathers house, to morrow night:
And in the wood, a league without the towne
(Where I did meete thee once with *Helena*
To do obseruance to a morne of May)
There will I stay for thee.
Her. My good *Lysander*,
I sweare to thee, by *Cupids* strongest bowe,
By his best arrowe, with the golden heade,
By the simplicitie of *Venus* doues,
By that which knitteth soules, and prospers loues,
And by that fire which burnd the *Carthage* queene,
When the false *Troian* vnder saile was seene,
By all the vowes that euer men haue broke,
(In number more then euer women spoke)
In that same place thou hast appointed mee,
To morrow truely will I meete with thee.
Lys. Keepe promise loue: looke, here comes *Helena*.

Enter Helena.

Her. God speede faire *Helena*: whither away?
Hel. Call you mee faire? That faire againe vnsay.
Demetrius loues your faire: ô happy faire!
Your eyes are loadstarres, and your tongues sweete aire
More tunable then larke, to sheepeheards eare,
When wheat is greene, when hauthorne buddes appeare.
Sickneſſe is catching: O, were fauour so,
Your words I catch, faire *Hermia*, ere I goe,
My eare should catch your voice, my eye, your eye,
My tongue should catch your tongues sweete melody.
Were the world mine, *Demetrius* being bated,
The rest ile giue to be to you translated.
O, teach mee how you looke, and with what Art,
You sway the motion of *Demetrius* heart.

Her. I frowne vpon him; yet hee loues mee ſtill.
Hel. O that your frowns would teach my ſmiles ſuch skil.
Her. I giue him curſes; yet he giues mee loue.
Hel. O that my prayers could ſuch affection mooue.
Her. The more I hate, the more he followes mee.
Hel. The more I loue, the more he hateth mee.
Her. His folly, *Helena*, is no fault of mine.
Hel. None but your beauty; would that fault were mine.
Her. Take comfort: he no more ſhall ſee my face:
Lyſander and my ſelfe will fly this place.
Before the time I did *Liſander* ſee,
Seem'd *Athens* as a Paradiſe to mee.
O then, what graces in my loue dooe dwell,
That hee hath turnd a heauen vnto a hell!
Lyſ. *Helen*, to you our mindes wee will vnfould:
To morrow night, when *Phœbe* doth beholde
Her ſiluer viſage, in the watty glaſſe,
Decking, with liquid pearle, the bladed graſſe
(A time, that louers flights doth ſtill conceale)
Through *Athens* gates, haue wee deuiſ'd to ſteale.
Her. And in the wood, where often you and I,
Vpon faint Primroſe beddes, were wont to lye,
Emptying our boſomes, of their counſell ſweld,
There my *Lyſander*, and my ſelfe ſhall meete,
And thence, from *Athens*, turne away our eyes,
To ſeeke new friends and ſtrange companions.
Farewell, ſweete playfellow: pray thou for vs:
And good lucke graunt thee thy *Demetrius*.
Keepe word *Lyſander*: we muſt ſtarue our ſight,
From louers foode, till morrow deepe midnight.
Exit Hermia.
Lyſ. I will my *Hermia*. *Helena* adieu:
As you on him, *Demetrius* dote on you, *Exit* Lyſander.
Hele. How happie ſome, ore otherſome, can be,
Through *Athens*, I am thought as faire as ſhee.

But what of that? *Demetrius* thinkes not ſo:
He will not knowe, what all, but hee doe know.
And as hee erres, doting on *Hermias* eyes:
So I, admiring of his qualities.
Things baſe and vile, holding no quantitie,
Loue can tranſpoſe to forme and dignitie.
Loue lookes not with the eyes, but with the minde:
And therefore is wingd *Cupid* painted blinde.
Nor hath loues minde of any iudgement taſte:
Wings, and no eyes, figure, vnheedy haſte.
And therefore is loue ſaid to bee a childe:
Becauſe, in choyce, he is ſo oft beguil'd.
As waggiſh boyes, in game, themſelues forſweare:
So the boy, Loue, is periur'd euery where.
For, ere *Demetrius* lookt on *Hermias* eyen,
Hee hayld downe othes, that he was onely mine.
And when this haile ſome heate, from *Hermia*, felt,
So he diſſolued, and ſhowrs of oathes did melt.
I will goe tell him of faire *Hermias* flight:
Then, to the wodde, will he, to morrow night,
Purſue her: and for this intelligence,
If I haue thankes, it is a deare expenſe:
But herein meane I to enrich my paine,
To haue his ſight thither, and back againe. *Exit.*

Enter Quince, *the Carpenter; and* Snugge, *the Ioyner; and* Bottom, *the Weauer; and* Flute, *the Bellowes mender; &* Snout, *the Tinker; and* Starueling *the Tayler.*

Quin. Is all our company heere?

Bot. You were beſt to call them generally, man by man, according to the ſcrippe.

Quin. Here is the ſcrowle of euery mans name, which is thought fit, through al *Athens*, to play in our Enterlude, before the Duke, & the Dutches; on his wedding day at night.

Bott. Firſt good *Peeter Quince*, ſay what the Play treats on: then read the names of the Actors: & ſo grow to a point.

Quin.

A Midſommer nightes dreame.

Quin. Mary, our Play is the moſt lamentable comedy, and moſt cruell death of *Pyramus* and *Thiſby*.

Bot. A very good peece of worke, I aſſure you, & a merry. Now good *Peeter Quince*, call forth your Actors, by the ſcrowle. Maſters, ſpreade your ſelues.

Quin. Anſwere, as I call you *Nick Bottom*, the Weauer?

Bott. Readie: Name what part I am for, and proceede.

Quin. You, *Nick Bottom* are ſet downe for *Pyramus*.

Bott. What is *Pyramus*? A louer, or a tyrant?

Quin. A louer that kils himſelfe, moſt gallant, for loue.

Bott. That will aſke ſome teares in the true performing of it. If I doe it, let the Audience looke to their eyes: I will mooue ſtormes: I will condole, in ſome meaſure. To the reſt yet, my chiefe humour is for a tyrant. I could play *Ercles* rarely, or a part to teare a Cat in, to make all ſplit the raging rocks: and ſhiuering ſhocks, ſhall breake the locks of priſon gates. and *Phibbus* carre ſhall ſhine from farre, and make & marre the fooliſh Fates. This was lofte. Now, name the reſt of the Players. This is *Ercles* vaine, a tyrants vaine: A louer is more condoling.

Quin *Francis Flute*, the Bellowes mender.

Flu. Here *Peeter Quince*.

Quin. *Flute*, you muſt take *Thiſby*, on you.

Fla. What is *Thiſby*? A wandring knight?

Quin. It is the Lady, that *Pyramus* muſt loue. (ming.

Fl. Nay faith: let not me play a woman: I haue a beard co-

Quin. Thats all one: you ſhall play it in a Maſke; and you may ſpeake as ſmall as you will.

Bott. And I may hide my face, let me play *Thiſby* to: Ile ſpeake in a monſtrous little voice; *Thiſne, Thiſne*, ah *Pyramus*, my louer deare, thy *Thyſby* deare, & Lady deare.

Qu. No, no you muſt play *Pyramus* & *Flute*, you *Thyſby*.

Bot. Well, proceede, *Qui. Robin Starueling*, the Taylor?

Star. Here *Peeter Quince*.

Quin. *Robin Starueling*, you muſt play *Thyſbyes* mother.

Tom Snowte, the Tinker?

Snowt. Here *Peter Quince.*

Quin. You, *Pyramus* father; my ſelfe, *Thiſbies* father; *Snugge*, the Ioyner, you the Lyons part: And I hope here is a Play fitted.

Snug. Haue you the Lyons part written? Pray you, if it bee, giue it mee: for I am ſlowe of ſtudie.

Quin. You may doe it, *extempore*: for it is nothing but roaring.

Bott. Let mee play the Lyon too. I will roare, that I will doe any mans heart good to heare mee. I will roare, that I will make the Duke ſay; Let him roare againe; let him roare againe.

Quin. And you ſhould do it too terribly, you would fright the Dutcheſſe, and the Ladies, that they would ſhrike: and that were inough to hang vs all.

All. That would hang vs, euery mothers ſonne.

Bot. I grant you, friends, if you ſhould fright the Ladies out of their wits, they would haue no more diſcretion, but to hang vs: but I will aggrauate my voice ſo, that I wil roare you as gently, as any ſucking doue: I will roare you, and 'twere any Nightingale.

Quin. You can play no part but *Piramus*: for *Piramus* is a ſweete fac't man; a proper man as one ſhall ſee in a ſommers day; a moſt louely gentlemanlike man: therefore you muſt needes play *Piramus.*

Bot. Well: I will vndertake it. What beard were I beſt to play it in?

Quin. Why? what you will.

Bot. I wil diſcharge it, in either your ſtraw colour beard, your Orange tawnie bearde, your purple in graine beard, or your french crowne colour beard, your perfit yellow.

Quin. Some of your french crownes haue no haire at all; and then you will play bare fac't. But maiſters here are your parts, and I am to intreat you, requeſt you, and deſire you

you, to con them by to morrow night: and meete mee in the palace wood, a mile without the towne, by Moone-light; there will wee rehearſe: for if wee meete in the city, wee ſhal be dogd with company, and our deuiſes known. In the meane time, I will draw a bill of properties, ſuch as our play wants. I pray you faile me not.

Bot Wee will meete, & there we may rehearſe moſt obſcenely, and coragiouſly. Take paines, bee perfit: adieu.

Quin. At the Dukes oke wee meete.

Bot. Enough: holde, or cut bowſtrings. *Exeunt.*

II.i. ¶ *Enter a* Fairie *at one doore, and* Robin goodfellow *at another.*

Robin. How now ſpirit, whither wander you?

Fa. Ouer hill, ouer dale, thorough buſh, thorough brier,
Ouer parke, ouer pale, thorough flood, thorough fire:
I do wander euery where; ſwifter than the Moons ſphere:
And I ſerue the Fairy Queene, to dew her orbs vpon the greene.
The cowſlippes tall her Penſioners bee,
In their gold coats, ſpottes you ſee:
Thoſe be Rubies, Fairie fauours:
In thoſe freckles, liue their ſauours.
I muſt goe ſeeke ſome dew droppes here,
And hang a pearle in euery couſlippes eare.
Farewell thou Lobbe of ſpirits: Ile be gon.
Our Queene, and all her Elues come here anon.

Rob. The king doth keepe his Reuels here to night.
Take heede the Queene come not within his ſight.
For *Oberon* is paſſing fell and wrath:
Becauſe that ſhe, as her attendant, hath
A louely boy ſtollen, from an Indian king:
She neuer had ſo ſweete a changeling.
And iealous *Oberon* would haue the childe,
Knight of his traine, to trace the forreſts wilde.
But ſhee, perforce, withholds the loued boy,
Crownes him with flowers, and makes him all her ioy.

A Midſommer nightes dreame.

And now, they neuer meete in groue, or greene,
By fountaine cleare, or ſpangled ſtarlight ſheene,
But they doe ſquare, that all their Elues, for feare,
Creepe into acorne cups, and hide them there.
Fa. Either I miſtake your ſhape, and making, quite,
Or els you are that ſhrewde and knauiſh ſprite,
Call'd *Robin goodfellow*. Are not you hee,
That frights the maidens of the Villageree,
Skim milke, and ſometimes labour in the querne,
And bootleſſe make the breathleſſe huſwife cherne,
And ſometime make the drinke to beare no barme,
Miſſelead nightwanderers, laughing at their harme?
Thoſe, that Hobgoblin call you, and ſweete Puck,
You doe their worke, and they ſhall haue good luck.
Are not you hee?
Rob. Thou ſpeakeſt aright; I am that merry wanderer of
I ieaſt to *Oberon*, and make him ſmile, (the night,
When I a fat and beane-fed horſe beguile;
Neyghing, in likeneſſe of a filly fole,
And ſometime lurke I in a goſſippes bole,
In very likeneſſe of a roſted crabbe,
And when ſhe drinkes, againſt her lips I bob,
And on her withered dewlop, poure the ale.
The wiſeſt Aunt, telling the ſaddeſt tale,
Sometime, for three foote ſtoole, miſtaketh mee;
Then ſlippe I from her bumme, downe topples ſhe,
And tailour cryes, and falles into a coffe;
And then the whole Quire hould their hippes, and loffe,
And waxen in their mirth, and neeze, and ſweare
A merrier hower was neuer waſted there.
But roome Faery: here comes *Oberon*.
Fa. And here, my miſtreſſe. Would that he were gon.
Enter the King of Fairies, at one doore, with his traine; and the Queene, at another, with hers.
Ob. Ill met by moonelight, proud *Tytania*.

Qu. What, Iealous *Oberon*? Fairy ſkippe hence.
I haue forſworne his bedde, and company.
Ob. Tarry, raſh wanton. Am not I thy Lord?
Qu. Then I muſt be thy Lady: but I know
When thou haſt ſtollen away from Fairy land,
And in the ſhape of *Corin*, ſat all day,
Playing on pipes of corne, and verſing loue,
To amorous *Phillida*. Why art thou here
Come from the fartheſt ſteppe of *India*?
But that, forſooth, the bounſing *Amaſon*,
Your buſkind miſtreſſe, and your warriour loue,
To *Theſeus* muſt be wedded; and you come,
To giue their bedde, ioy and proſperitie.
Ob. How canſt thou thus, for ſhame, *Tytania*,
Glaunce at my credit, with *Hippolita*?
Knowing, I know thy loue to *Theſeus*,
Didſt not thou lead him through the glimmering night,
From *Perigenia*, whom he rauiſhed?
And make him, with faire Eagles, breake his faith
With *Ariadne*, and *Antiopa*?
Quee. Theſe are the forgeries of iealouſie:
And neuer, ſince the middle Sommers ſpring,
Met we on hill, in dale, forreſt, or meade,
By paued fountaine, or by ruſhie brooke,
Or in the beached margent of the Sea,
To daunce our ringlets to the whiſtling winde,
But with thy brawles thou haſt diſturbd our ſport.
Therefore the windes, pyping to vs in vaine,
As in reuenge, haue ſuckt vp, from the Sea,
Contagious fogges: which, falling in the land,
Hath euery pelting riuer made ſo proude,
That they haue ouerborne their Continents.
The Oxe hath therefore ſtretcht his yoake in vaine,
The Ploughman loſt his ſweat, and the greene corne
Hath rotted, ere his youth attainde a beарde:

A Midſommer nights dreame.

The fold ſtands empty, in the drowned field,
And crowes are fatted with the murrion flocke,
The nine mens Morris is fild vp with mudde:
And the queint Mazes, in the wanton greene,
For lacke of tread, are vndiſtinguiſhable.
The humane mortals want their winter heere
No night is now with hymne or carroll bleſt.
Therefore the Moone (the gouerneſſe of floods)
Pale in her anger, waſhes all the aire;
That Rheumaticke diſeaſes doe abound.
And, thorough this diſtemperature, wee ſee
The ſeaſons alter: hoary headed froſts
Fall in the freſh lappe of the Crymſon roſe,
And on old *Hyems* chinne and Icy crowne,
An odorous Chaplet of ſweete Sommer buddes
Is, as in mockery, ſet The Spring, the Sommer,
The childing Autumne, angry Winter change
Their wonted Liueries: and the mazed worlde,
By their increaſe, now knowes not which is which:
And this ſame progeny of euils,
Comes from our debate, from our diſſention:
We are their Parents and originall.
Oberon. Doe you amend it then: it lyes in you.
Why ſhould *Titania* croſſe her *Oberon*?
I doe but begge a little Changeling boy,
To be my Henchman.
Queene. Set your heart at reſt.
The Faiery Land buies not the childe of mee,
His mother was a Votreſſe of my order:
And in the ſpiced *Indian* ayer, by night,
Full often hath ſhe goſſipt by my ſide,
And ſat, with me on *Neptunes* yellow ſands
Marking th'embarked traders on the flood:
When we haue laught to ſee the ſailes conceaue,
And grow bigge bellied, with the wanton winde:

Which

Which ſhe, with prettie, and with ſwimming gate,
Following (her wombe then rich with my young ſquire)
Would imitate, and ſaile vpon the land,
To fetch me trifles, and returne againe,
As from a voyage, rich with marchandiſe.
But ſhe, being mortall, of that boy did dye,
And, for her ſake, doe I reare vp her boy:
And, for her ſake, I will not part with him.
Ob. How long, within this wood, entend you ſtay?
Quee. Perchaunce, till after *Theſeus* wedding day.
If you will patiently daunce in our Round,
And ſee our Moonelight Reuelles, goe with vs:
If not, ſhunne me, and I will ſpare your haunts.
Ob. Giue mee that boy, and I will goe with thee.
Quee. Not for thy Fairy kingdome. Fairies away.
We ſhall chide downeright, if I longer ſtay. *Exeunt.*
Ob. Well: goe thy way. Thou ſhalt not from this groue,
Till I torment thee, for this iniury.
My gentle *Pucke* come hither: thou remembreſt,
Since once I ſat vpon a promontory,
And heard a Mearemaide, on a Dolphins backe,
Vttering ſuch dulcet and hermonious breath,
That the rude ſea grewe ciuill at her ſong,
And certaine ſtarres ſhot madly from their Spheares,
To heare the Sea-maids muſicke.
Puck. I remember.
Ob. That very time, I ſaw (but thou could'ſt not)
Flying betweene the colde Moone and the earth,
Cupid, all arm'd: a certaine aime he tooke
At a faire Veſtall, throned by weſt,
And looſ'd his loue-ſhaft ſmartly, from his bowe,
As it ſhould pearce a hundred thouſand hearts:
But, I might ſee young *Cupids* fiery ſhaft
Quencht in the chaſt beames of the watry Moone:
And the imperiall Votreſſe paſſed on,

In maiden meditation, fancy free.
Yet markt I, where the bolt of *Cupid* fell.
It fell vpon a little weſterne flower;
Before, milke white; now purple, with loues wound,
And maidens call it, Loue in idleneſſe.
Fetch mee that flowre: the herbe I ſhewed thee once.
The iewce of it, on ſleeping eyeliddes laide,
Will make or man or woman madly dote,
Vpon the next liue creature that it ſees.
Fetch mee this herbe, and be thou here againe
Ere the *Leuiathan* can ſwimme a league.
Pu. Ile put a girdle, roūd about the earth, in forty minutes.
Oberon. Hauing once this iuice,
Ile watch *Titania*, when ſhe is a ſleepe,
And droppe the liquor of it, in her eyes:
The next thing then ſhe, waking, lookes vpon
(Be it on Lyon, Beare, or Wolfe, or Bull,
On medling Monky, or on buſie Ape)
She ſhall purſue it, with the ſoule of Loue.
And ere I take this charme, from of her ſight
(As I can take it with another herbe)
Ile make her render vp her Page, to mee.
But, who comes here? I am inuiſible,
And I will ouerheare their conference.

Enter Demetrius, Helena *following him.*

Deme. I loue thee not: therefore purſue me not,
Where is *Lyſander*, and faire *Hermia*?
The one Ile ſtay: the other ſtayeth me.
Thou told'ſt me, they were ſtolne vnto this wood:
And here am I, and wodde, within this wood:
Becauſe I cannot meete my *Hermia*.
Hence, get the gone, and follow mee no more.
Hel. You draw mee, you hard hearted Adamant:
But yet you draw not Iron. For my heart
Is true as ſteele. Leaue you your power to draw,

And

And I ſhall haue no power to follow you.
Deme. Doe I entiſe you? Doe I ſpeake you faire?
Or rather doe I not in plaineſt truthe,
Tell you I doe not, not I cannot loue you?
Hele. And euen, for that, do I loue you, the more:
I am your Spaniell: and, *Demetrius*,
The more you beat mee, I will fawne on you.
Vſe me but as your Spaniell: ſpurne me, ſtrike mee,
Neglect mee, looſe me: onely giue me leaue
(Vnworthie as I am) to follow you.
What worſer place can I begge, in your loue
(And yet, a place of high reſpect with mee)
Then to be vſed as you vſe your dogge.
Deme. Tempt not, too much, the hatred of my ſpirit.
For I am ſick, when I do looke on thee.
Hele. And I am ſick, when I looke not on you.
Deme. You doe impeach your modeſtie too much,
To leaue the citie, and commit your ſelfe,
Into the hands of one that loues you not,
To truſt the opportunitie of night,
And the ill counſell of a deſert place,
With the rich worth of your virginitie.
Hel. Your vertue is my priuiledge: For that
It is not night, when I doe ſee your face.
Therefore, I thinke, I am not in the night,
Nor doth this wood lacke worlds of company.
For you, in my reſpect, are all the world.
Then, how can it be ſaide, I am alone,
When all the world is here, to looke on mee?
Deme. Ile runne from thee, and hide me in the brakes,
And leaue thee to the mercy of wilde beaſtes.
Hel. The wildeſt hath not ſuch a heart as you.
Runne when you will: The ſtory ſhall be chaung'd:
Apollo flies and *Daphne* holds the chaſe:
The Doue purſues the Griffon: the milde Hinde

Makes ſpeede to catch the Tigre. Booteleſſe ſpeede,
When cowardiſe purſues, and valour flies.
Demet. I will not ſtay thy queſtions, Let me goe:
Or if thou followe mee, do not beleeue,
But I ſhall doe thee miſchiefe, in the wood.
Hel. I, in the Temple, in the towne, the fielde,
You doe me miſchiefe. Fy *Demetrius*.
Your wrongs doe ſet a ſcandall on my ſex:
We cannot fight for loue, as men may doe:
We ſhould be woo'd, and were not made to wooe.
Ile follow thee and make a heauen of hell,
To dy vpon the hand I loue ſo well.
Ob. Fare thee well Nymph. Ere he do leaue this groue,
Thou ſhalt fly him, and he ſhall ſeeke thy loue.
Haſt thou the flower there? Welcome wanderer.

Enter Pucke.

Puck. I, there it is.
Ob. I pray thee giue it mee.
I know a banke where the wilde time blowes,
Where Oxlips, and the nodding Violet growes,
Quite ouercanopi'd with luſhious woodbine,
With ſweete muſke roſes, and with Eglantine:
There ſleepes *Tytania*, ſometime of the night,
Luld in theſe flowers, with daunces and delight:
And there the ſnake throwes her enammeld ſkinne,
Weed wide enough to wrappe a Fairy in.
And, with the iuyce of this, Ile ſtreake her eyes,
And make her full of hateſull phantaſies.
Take thou ſome of it, and ſeeke through this groue:
A ſweete *Athenian* Lady is in loue,
With a diſdainefull youth: annoint his eyes.
But doe it, when the next thing he eſpies,
May be the Ladie. Thou ſhalt know the man,
By the *Athenian* garments he hath on.
Effect it with ſome care; that he may prooue

More fond on her, then ſhe vpon her loue:
And looke thou meete me ere the firſt Cocke crowe.
Pu. Feare not my Lord: your ſeruant ſhall do ſo. *Exeunt*,
Enter Tytania *Queene of Fairies, with her traine.*
Quee. Come, now a Roundell, and a Fairy ſong:
Then, for the third part of a minute hence,
Some to kill cankers in the muſk roſe buds,
Some warre with Reremiſe, for their lethten wings,
To make my ſmall Elues coates, and ſome keepe backe
The clamorous Owle, that nightly hootes and wonders
At our queint ſpirits: Sing me now a ſleepe:
Then to your offices, and let mee reſt.

Fairies ſing.

You ſpotted Snakes, with double tongue,
Thorny Hedgehoggesbe not ſeene,
Newts and blinde wormes do no wrong,
Come not neere our Fairy Queene.
Philomele, with melody,
Sing in our ſweete Lullaby,
Lulla, lulla, lullaby, lulla, lulla, lullaby,
Neuer harme, nor ſpell, nor charme,
Come our louely lady nigh.
So good night, with lullaby.
1. *Fai.* Weauing Spiders come not heere:
Hence you long legd Spinners, hence:
Beetles blacke approach not neere:
Worme nor ſnaile doe no offence.
Philomele with melody, &c.
2. *Fai.* Hence away: now all is well:
One aloofe, ſtand Centinell.

Enter Oberon.

Ob. What thou ſeeſt, when thou doeſt wake,
Doe it for thy true loue take:
Loue and languiſh for his ſake.
Be it Ounce, or Catte, or Beare,

 Pard,

Pard, or Boare with briſtled haire,
In thy eye that ſhall appeare,
When thou wak'ſt, it is thy deare:
Wake, when ſome vile thing is neere.
Enter Lyſander: *and* Hermia.
Lyſ. Faire loue, you faint, with wandring in the wood:
And to ſpeake troth I haue forgot our way.
Weele reſt vs *Hermia*, if you thinke it good,
And tarry for the comfort of the day.
Her. Bet it ſo *Lyſander*: finde you out a bedde:
For I, vpon this banke, will reſt my head.
Lyſ. One turfe ſhall ſerue, as pillow, for vs both,
One heart, one bedde, two boſomes, and one troth.
Her. Nay god *Lyſander*: for my ſake, my deere
Ly further off, yet; doe not lye ſo neere.
Lyſ. O take the ſenſe, ſweete, of my innocence.
Loue takes the meaning, in loues conference,
I meane that my heart vnto yours it knit;
So that but one heart wee can make of it:
Two boſomes interchained with an oath:
So then two boſomes, and a ſingle troth.
Then, by your ſide, no bed-roome me deny:
For lying ſo, *Hermia*, I doe not lye.
Her. Lyſander riddles very prettily.
Now much beſhrewe my manners, and my pride,
If *Hermia* meant to ſay, *Lyſander* lyed.
But gentle friend, for loue and curteſie,
Ly further off, in humane modeſty:
Such ſeparation, as may well be ſaid
Becomes a vertuous batcheler, and a maide,
So farre be diſtant, and good night ſweete friend:
Thy loue nere alter till thy ſweete life end.
Lyſ. Amen, amen, to that faire prayer, ſay I,
And then end life, when I end loyalty.
Heere is my bed: ſleepe giue thee all his reſt.

VVith

Her. With halfe that wiſh, the wiſhers eyes be preſt.

Enter Pucke.

Puck. Through the forreſt haue I gone.
But *Athenian* found I none,
On whoſe eyes I might approue
This flowers force in ſtirring loue.
Night and ſilence. Who is heere?
Weedes of *Athens* he doth weare:
This is hee (my maſter ſaide)
Deſpiſed the *Athenian* maide:
And here the maiden, ſleeping ſound,
On the danke and dirty ground.
Pretty ſowle, ſhe durſt not lye,
Neere this lack-loue, this kil-curteſie.
Chuſle, vpon thy eyes I throwe
All the power this charme doth owe:
When thou wak'ſt, let loue forbidde
Sleepe, his ſeat, on thy eye lidde.
So awake, when I am gon:
For I muſt now to *Oberon.* *Exit.*

Enter Demetrius *and* Helena *running.*

Hel. Stay; though thou kill mee, ſweete *Demetrius.*
De. I charge thee hence, and doe not haunt mee thus.
Hele. O, wilt thou darkling leaue me? doe not ſo,
De. Stay, on thy perill: I alone will goe.
Hel. O, I am out of breath, in this fond chaſe,
The more my prayer, the leſſer is my grace.
Happie is *Hermia*, whereſoere ſhe lies:
For ſhe hath bleſſed, and attractiue eyes.
How came her eyes ſo bright? Not with ſalt teares,
If ſo, my eyes are oftner waſht then hers.
No, no: I am as vgly as a Beare:
For beaſtes that meete mee, runne away, for feare.
Therefore, no maruaile, though *Demetrius*
Doe, as a monſter, fly my preſence, thus.

What wicked and dissembling glasse, of mine,
Made me compare with *Hermias* sphery eyen!
But, who is here? *Lysander*, on the ground?
Dead, or a sleepe? I see no blood, no wound,
Lysander, if you liue, good sir awake.
Lys. And runne through fire, I will for thy sweete sake.
Transparent *Helena*, nature shewes arte,
That through thy bosome, makes me see thy heart.
Where is *Demetrius*? Oh how fit a word
Is that vile name, to perish on my sworde!
Hel. Do not say so, *Lysander*, say not so.
What though he loue your *Hermia*? Lord, what though?
Yet *Hermia* still loues you: then be content.
Lys. Content with *Hermia*? No: I doe repent
The tedious minutes, I with her haue spent.
Not *Hermia*, but *Helena* I loue.
VVho will not change a Rauen for a doue?
The will of man is by his reason swai'd:
And reason saies you are the worthier maide.
Things growing are not ripe, vntill their season:
So I, being young, till now ripe not to reason.
And touching now, the pomt of humane skill,
Reason becomes the Marshall to my will,
And leads mee to your eyes; where I orelooke
Loues stories, written in loues richest booke.
Hel. Wherefore was I to this keene mockery borne?
When, at your hands, did I deserue this scorne?
Is't not enough, is't not enough, young man,
That I did neuer, no nor neuer can,
Deserue a sweete looke from *Demetrius* eye,
But you must flout my insufficiency?
Good troth you doe mee wrong (good sooth you doe)
In such disdainfull manner, mee to wooe.
But, fare you well: perforce, I must confesse,
I thought you Lord of more true gentlenesse.

O,

O, that a Ladie, of one man refuſ'd,
Should, of another, therefore be abuſ'd! *Exit.*
Lyſ. She ſees not *Hermia*. *Hermia*, ſleepe thou there,
And neuer maiſt thou come *Lyſander* neere.
For, as a ſurfet of the ſweeteſt things
The deepeſt loathing, to the ſtomacke bringes:
Or, as the hereſies, that men doe leaue,
Are hated moſt of thoſe they did deceiue:
So thou, my ſurfet, and my hereſie,
Of all be hated; but the moſt, of mee:
And all my powers addreſſe your loue and might,
To honour *Helen*, and to be her knight. *Exit.*
Her. Helpe mee *Lyſander*, helpe mee: do thy beſt
To pluck this crawling ſerpent, from my breſt.
Ay mee, for pittie. What a dreame was here?
Lyſander looke, how I doe quake with feare.
Me thought, a ſerpent eate my heart away,
And you ſate ſmiling at his cruell pray.
Lyſander what, remou'd? *Lyſander*, Lord,
What, out of hearing, gon? No ſound, no word?
Alacke where are you? Speake, and if you heare:
Speake, of all loues. I ſwoune almoſt with feare.
No, then I well perceiue, you are not ny:
Either death, or you, Ile finde immediately. *Exit.*

III.i.

Enter the Clownes.

Bott. Are wee all met?
Quin. Pat, pat: and heres a maruailes conuenient place, for our rehearſall. This greene plot ſhall be our ſtage, this hauthorne brake our tyring houſe, and wee will doe it in action, as wee will doe it before the Duke.
Bott Peeter Quince?
Quin. What ſaieſt thou, bully, *Bottom*?
Bot. There are things in this Comedy, of *Pyramus* and *Thiſby*, that will neuer pleaſe. Firſt, *Pyramus* muſt draw a ſworde, to kill himſelfe; which the Ladies cannot abide,

A Midſommer nightes dreame.

How anſwere you that?

Snout. Berlakin, a parlous feare.

Star. I beleeue, we muſt leaue the killing, out, when all is done.

Bott. Not a whit: I haue a deuiſe to make all well. Write me a Prologue, and let the Prologue ſeeme to ſay; we wil do no harme, with our ſwords, and that *Pyramus* is not kild indeede: and for the more better aſſurance, tel them, that I *Pyramus* am not *Pyramus*, but *Bottom* the weauer: this will put them out of feare.

Quin. Well: wee will haue ſuch a Prologue, and it ſhall be written in eight and ſix.

Bot. No: make it two more: let it be written in eight & eight.

Snout. Will not the ladies be afeard of the Lyon?

Star. I feare it, I promiſe you.

Bot. Maſters, you ought to conſider with your ſelfe, to bring in (God ſhielde vs) a Lyon among Ladies, is a moſt dreadfull thing. For there is not a more fearefull wilde foule then your Lyon liuing: & we ought to looke toote.

Sno. Therfore, another Prologue muſt tel, he is not a Lion.

Bot. Nay: you muſt name his name, and halfe his face muſt be ſeene through the Lions necke, and he himſelfe muſt ſpeake through, ſaying thus, or to the ſame defect; Ladies, or faire Ladies, I would wiſh you, or I would requeſt you, or I wold intreat you, not to feare, not to trèble: my life for yours If you thinke I come hither as a Lyon, it were pittie of my life. No: I am no ſuch thing: I am a man as other men are: & there indeed, let him name his name, and tell them plainely he is *Snugge*, the ioyner.

Quin. Well: it ſhall be ſo: but there is two hard things: that is, to bring the Moone-light into a chamber: for you know, *Pyramus* and *Thiſby* meete by Moone-light

Sn. Doth the Moone ſhine, that night, we play our Play?

Bot.

Bo. A Calender, a Calender: looke in the Almanack: finde out Moone-ſhine, finde out Moone-ſhine.

Quin. Yes: it doth ſhine that night.

Cet. Why then, may you leaue a caſement of the great chamber window (where we play) open; and the Moone may ſhine in at the caſement.

Quin. I: or els, one muſt come in, with a buſh of thorns, & a lātern, and ſay he comes to diſfigure, or to preſent the perſon of Moone-ſhine. Then, there is another thing; we muſt haue a wal in the great chāber: for *Pyramus* & *Thiſby* (ſaies the ſtory) did talke through the chinke of a wall.

Sno. You can neuer bring in a wal. What ſay you *Bottom?*

Bot. Some man or other muſt preſent wall: and let him haue ſome plaſter, or ſom lome, or ſome rough caſt, about him, to ſignifie wall; or let him holde his fingers thus: and through that crany, ſhall *Pyramus* and *Thiſby* whiſper.

Quin. If that may be, then all is well. Come, ſit downe euery mothers ſonne, and reherſe your parts. *Pyramus*, you beginne: when you haue ſpoken your ſpeech, enter into that Brake, and ſo euery one according to his cue,

Enter Robin

Ro. What hempen home ſpunnes haue we ſwaggring here,
So neere the Cradle of the Fairy Queene?
What, a play toward? Ile be an Auditor,
An Actor too perhappes, if I ſee cauſe.

Quin. Speake *Pyramus*: *Thyſby* ſtand forth.

Pyra. *Thiſby* the flowers of odious ſauours ſweete,

Quin. Odours, odorous.

Py. Odours ſauours ſweete,
So hath thy breath, my deareſt *Thiſby* deare,
But harke, a voice: ſtay thou but heere a while,
And by and by I will to thee appeare. *Exit.*

Quin. A ſtranger *Pyramus*, then ere played heere.

Thyſ. Muſt I ſpeake now?

A Midſommer nightes dreame.

Quin. I marry muſt you. For you muſt vnderſtād, he goes
but to ſee a noyſe, that he heard, and is to come againe.
Thyſ. Moſt radiant *Pyramus*, moſt lillie white of hewe,
Of colour like the redroſe, on triumphant bryer,
Moſt brisky Iuuenall, and eeke moſt louely Iewe,
As true as trueſt horſe, that yet would neuer tyre,
Ile meete thee *Pyramus*, at *Ninnies* toumbe.
Quin. *Ninus* toumbe, man. Why? you muſt not ſpeake
That yet. That you anſwere to *Pyramus*. You ſpeake
Al your part at once, cues, and, all. *Pyramus*, enter: your cue
is paſt: It is; neuer tire.
Thyſ. O, as true as trueſt horſe, that yet would neuer tyre.
Py. If I were faire, *Thyſby*, I were onely thine.
Quin. O monſtrous! O ſtrange! We are haunted. Pray maſters fly maſters: helpe.
Rob. Ile follow you: Ile leade you about a Round,
Through bogge, through buſh, through brake, through bryer:
Sometime a horſe Ile be, ſometime a hound,
A hogge, a headleſſe Beare, ſometime a fier,
And neigh, and barke, and grunt, and rore, and burne,
Like horſe, hound, hogge, beare, fire, at euery turne. *Exit.*
Bott. Why doe they runne away? This is a knauery of them to make mee afeard. *Enter* Snowte.
Sn. O *Bottom*, thou art chaung'd. What do I ſee on thee?
Bot. What doe you ſee? You ſee an Aſſe head of your owne. Do you?

Enter Quince. *(Exit.*

Quin Bleſſe thee *Bottom*, bleſſe thee. Thou art trāſlated.
Bot. I ſee their knauery. This is to make an aſſe of mee, to fright me, if they could: but I wil not ſtirre from this place do what they can, I will walke vp and downe heere, and will ſing that they ſhall heare I am not afraide.
The Wooſell cock, ſo blacke of hewe,
With Orange tawny bill,

The

The Throſtle, with his note ſo true,
The Wren, with little quill,
Tytania. What Angell wakes me from my flowry bed?
Bot. The Fynch, the Sparrowe, and the Larke,
The plainſong Cuckow gray:
Whoſe note, full many a man doth marke,
And dares not anſwere, nay,
For indeede, who would ſet his wit to ſo fooliſh a birde?
Who would giue a bird the ly, though hee cry Cuckow, neuer ſo?
Tita. I pray thee, gentle mortall, ſing againe.
Myne eare is much enamoured of thy note:
So is mine eye enthralled to thy ſhape,
And thy faire vertues force (perforce) doth mooue mee,
On the firſt viewe to ſay, to ſweare, I loue thee.
Bott. Mee thinks miſtreſſe, you ſhould haue little reaſon for that. And yet, to ſay the truth, reaſon and loue keepe little company together, now a daies. The more the pitty, that ſome honeſt neighbours will not make them friends. Nay I can gleeke, vpon occaſion.
Tyta. Thou art as wiſe, as thou art beautifull.
Bott. Not ſo neither: but if I had wit enough to get out of this wood, I haue enough to ſerue mine owe turne.
Tyta Out of this wood, doe not deſire to goe:
Thou ſhalt remaine here, whether thou wilt or no,
I am a ſpirit, of no common rate:
The Sommer, ſtill, doth tend vpon my ſtate,
And I doe loue thee: therefore goe with mee.
Ile giue thee Fairies to attend on thee:
And they ſhall fetch thee Iewels, from the deepe,
And ſing, while thou, on preſſed flowers, doſt ſleepe:
And I will purge thy mortall groſſeneſſe ſo,
That thou ſhalt, like an ayery ſpirit, goe.
Peaſe-bloſſome, Cobweb, Moth, and *Muſtard-ſeede?*
Enter foure Fairyes,

Fairies. Readie: and I, and I, and I. Where shall we goe?

Tita. Be kinde and curteous to this gentleman,
Hop in his walkes, and gambole in his eyes,
Feede him with Apricocks, and Dewberries,
With purple Grapes, greene figges, and Mulberries,
The hony bagges steale from the humble Bees,
And for night tapers, croppe their waxen thighes,
And light them at the fiery Glowe-wormes eyes,
To haue my loue to bedde, and to arise,
And pluck the wings, from painted Butterflies,
To fanne the Moone-beames from his sleeping eyes,
Nod to him Elues, and doe him curtesies.

1. *Fai.* Haile mortall, haile.

2. *Fai.* Haile.

3. *Fai.* Haile.

Bot. I cry your worshipps mercy, hartily: I beseech your worshippes name,

Cob. Cobwebbe.

Bot. I shall desire you of more acquaintance, good master *Cobweb*: if I cut my finger, I shall make bolde with you. Your name honest gentleman?

Pea. Pease-blossome.

Bot. I pray you commend mee to mistresse *Squash*, your mother, and to master *Peascod*, your father. Good master *Pease-blossome*, I shall desire you of more acquaintance, to. Your name I beseech you sir?

Must. Mustardseede.

Bot. Good master *Mustardseede*, I know your patience well. That same cowardly, gyantlike, Ox-beefe hath deuourd many a gentleman of your house. I promise you, your kindred hath made my eyes water, ere now. I desire you more acquaintance, good master *Mustardseede*.

Tita. Come waite vpon him: leade him to my bower.
The Moone, me thinkes, lookes with a watry eye:
And when shee weepes, weepes euery little flower.

Lamen-

A Midſommer nightes dreame.

Lamenting ſome enforced chaſtitie.
Ty vp my louers tongue, bring him ſilently *Exit.*

Enter King of Fairies, *and* Robin goodfellow.

III.ii.

Ob. I wonder if *Titania* be awak't;
Then what it was, that next came in her eye,
Which ſhe muſt dote on, in extreamitie.
Here comes my meſſenger. How now, mad ſpirit?
What night-rule now about this haunted groue?
Puck. My miſtreſſe with a monſter is in loue,
Neere to her cloſe and conſecrated bower.
While ſhe was in her dull, and ſleeping hower,
A crew of patches, rude Mechanicals,
That worke for bread, vpon *Athenian* ſtalles,
Were met together to rehearſe a play,
Intended for great *Theſeus* nuptiall day:
The ſhalloweſt thickskinne, of that barraine ſort,
Who *Pyramus* preſented, in their ſport,
Forſooke his Scene, and entred in a brake,
When I did him at this aduantage take:
An Aſſes nole I fixed on his head.
Anon his *Thiſbie* muſt be anſwered,
And forth my Minnick comes. When they him ſpy;
As wilde geeſe, that the creeping Fouler eye,
Or ruſſet pated choughes, many in ſort
(Ryſing, and cawing, at the gunnes report)
Seuer themſelues, and madly ſweepe the sky:
So, at his ſight, away his fellowes fly,
And at our ſtampe, here ore and ore, one falles:
He murther cryes, and helpe from *Athens* cals
Their ſenſe, thus weake, loſt with their feares, thus ſtrong
Made ſenſeleſſe things begin to doe them wrong
For, briers and thornes, at their apparell, ſnatch:
Some ſleeues, ſome hats; from yeelders, all things catch.
I led them on, in this diſtracted feare,
And left ſweete *Pyramus* tranſlated there:

When in that moment (ſo it came to paſſe)
Tytania wak't, and ſtraight way lou'd an Aſſe.
Ob. This falles out better, then I could deuiſe.
But haſt thou yet latcht the *Athenians* eyes,
With the loue iuice, as I did bid thee doe?
Rob. I tooke him ſleeping (that is finiſht to)
And the *Athenian* woman, by his ſide;
That when he wak't, of force ſhe muſt be ey'd.
Enter Demetrius *and* Hermia.
Ob. Stand cloſe: this is the ſame *Athenian*.
Rob. This is the woman: but not this the man.
Demet. O, W hy rebuke you him, that loues you ſo?
Lay breath ſo bitter, on your bitter foe.
Her. Now I but chide: but I ſhould vſe thee worſe,
For thou (I feare) haſt giuen me cauſe to curſe.
If thou haſt ſlaine *Lyſander*, in his ſleepe; (to,
Being ore ſhooes in blood, plunge in the deepe, & kill mee
The Sunne was not ſo true vnto the day,
As hee to mee. Would hee haue ſtollen away,
From ſleeping *Hermia*? Ile beleeue, as ſoone,
This whole earth may be bor'd, and that the Moone
May through the Center creepe, and ſo diſpleaſe
Her brothers noonetide, with th' *Antipodes*.
It cannot be, but thou haſt murdred him.
So ſhould a murtherer looke; ſo dead, ſo grimme.
Dem. So ſhould the murthered looke, and ſo ſhould *I*,
Pearſt through the heart, with your ſterne cruelty.
Yet you, the murtherer, looke as bright, as cleere,
As yonder *Venus*, in her glimmering ſpheare.
Her. Whats this to my *Lyſander*? Where is hee?
Ah good *Demetrius*, wilt thou giue him mee?
Deme. I had rather giue his carcaſſe to my hounds.
Her. Out dog, out curre: thou driu'ſt me paſt the bounds
Of maidens patience. Haſt thou ſlaine him then?
Henceforth be neuer numbred among men.

O,

O, once tell true: tell true, euen for my ſake:
Durſt thou haue lookt vpon him, being awake?
And haſt thou kild him, ſleeping? O braue touch!
Could not a worme, an Adder do ſo much?
An Adder did it: For with doubler tongue
Then thyne (thou ſerpent) neuer Adder ſtung.
Deme. You ſpende your paſſion, on a miſpriſ'd mood:
I am not guilty of *Lyſanders* bloode:
Nor is he deade, for ought that I can tell.
Her. I pray thee, tell mee then, that he is well.
De. And if I could, what ſhould I get therefore?
Her. A priuiledge, neuer to ſee mee more:
And from thy hated preſence part I: ſee me no more;
Whether he be dead or no. *Exit.*
Deme. There is no following her in this fierce vaine.
Heere therefore, for a while, I will remaine.
So ſorrowes heauineſſe doth heauier growe.
For debt that bankrout ſlippe doth ſorrow owe:
Which now in ſome ſlight meaſure it will pay;
If for his tender here I make ſome ſtay. *Lyeth downe.*
Ob. What haſt thou done? Thou haſt miſtaken quite,
And laid the loue iuice on ſome true loues ſight.
Of thy miſpriſion, muſt perforce enſue
Some true loue turnd, and not a falſe turnd true.
Robi. Then fate orerules, that one man holding troth,
A million faile, confounding oath on oath.
Ob. About the wood, goe ſwifter then the winde,
And *Helena* of *Athens* looke thou finde.
All fancy ſicke ſhe is and pale of cheere,
With ſighes of loue, that coſts the freſh blood deare.
By ſome illuſion ſee thou bring her here:
Ile charme his eyes, againſt ſhe doe appeare.
Robin. I goe, I goe, looke how I goe.
Swifter then arrow, from the *Tartars* bowe.
Ob. Flower of this purple dy,

Hit with *Cupids* archery,
Sinke in apple of his eye,
When his loue he doth espy,
Let her shine as gloriously
As the *Venus* of the sky.
When thou wak'st, if she be by,
Begge of her, for remedy.

Enter Puck.

Puck. Captaine of our Fairy band,
Helena is heere at hande,
And the youth, mistooke by mee,
Pleading for a louers fee
Shall wee their fond pageant see?
Lord, what fooles these mortals bee!
Ob. Stand aside. The noyse, they make,
Will cause *Demetrius* to awake.
Pu. Then will two, at once, wooe one:
That must needes be sport alone.
And those things do best please mee,
That befall prepost'rously.

Enter Lysander, *and* Helena.

Lys. Why should you think, that I should wooe in scorne?
Scorne, and derision, neuer come in teares.
Looke when I vow, I weepe: and vowes so borne,
In their natiuitie all truth appeares,
How can these things, in mee, seeme scorne to you?
Bearing the badge of faith to prooue them true.
Hel. You doe aduance your cunning, more, and more,
When truth kills truth, ô diuelish holy fray!
These vowes are *Hermias*. Will you giue her ore?
Weigh oath, with oath, and you will nothing waigh.
Your vowes to her, and mee (put in two scales)
Will euen weigh: and both as light as tales.
Lys. I had no iudgement, when to her I swore.
Hel. Nor none, in my minde, now you giue her ore.

Lys.

Lyſ. *Demetrius* loues her: and he loues not you.
Deme. O *Helen*, goddeſſe, nymph, perfect diuine,
To what, my loue, ſhall I compare thine eyne?
Chriſtall is muddy. O, how ripe, in ſhowe,
Thy lippes, thoſe kiſſing cherries, tempting growe!
That pure congealed white, high *Taurus* ſnow,
Fand with the Eaſterne winde, turnes to a crowe,
When thou holdſt vp thy hand, O let me kiſſe
This Princeſſe of pure white, this ſeale of bliſſe.
Hel. O ſpight! O hell! I ſee, you all are bent
To ſet againſt mee, for your merriment,
If you were ciuill, and knew curteſie,
You would not doe mee thus much iniury.
Can you not hate mee, as I know you doe,
But you muſt ioyne, in ſoules, to mocke mee too?
If you were men, as men you are in ſhowe,
You would not vſe a gentle Lady ſo;
To vowe, and ſweare, and ſuperpraiſe my parts,
When I am ſure, you hate mee with your hearts.
You both are Riuals, and loue *Hermia*:
And now both Riualles, to mock *Helena*.
A trim exploit, a manly enterpriſe,
To coniure teares vp, in a poore maides eyes,
With your deriſion None, of noble ſort,
Would ſo offend a virgine, and extort
A poore ſoules patience, all to make you ſport.
Lyſand. You are vnkinde, *Demetrius*: be not ſo.
For you loue *Hermia*: this you know I know
And heare, with all good will, with all my heart,
In *Hermias* loue I yeelde you vp my part:
And yours of *Helena*, to mee bequeath:
Whom I doe loue, and will do till my death.
Hel. Neuer did mockers waſte more idle breath.
Deme. *Lyſander*, keepe thy *Hermia*: I will none.
If ere I lou'd her, all that loue is gone.

My heart to her, but as gueſtwiſe, ſoiournd:
And now to *Helen*, is it home returnd,
There to remaine.
Lyſ. *Helen*, it is not ſo.
Deme. Diſparage not the faith, thou doſt not know;
Leaſt to thy perill, thou aby it deare.
Looke where thy loue comes: yonder is thy deare.
Enter Hermia.
Her. Darke night, that from the eye, his function takes,
The eare more quicke of apprehenſion makes.
Wherein it doth impaire the ſeeing ſenſe,
It payes the hearing double recompence.
Thou art not, by myne eye, *Lyſander*, found:
Mine eare, I thanke it, brought me to thy ſound.
But why, vnkindly, didſt thou leaue mee ſo?
Lyſ. Why ſhould he ſtay, whom loue doth preſſe to go?
Her. What loue could preſſe *Lyſander*, from my ſide?
Lyſ. *Lyſanders* loue (that would not let him bide)
Faire *Helena*: who more engilds the night
Then all yon fiery oes, and eyes of light.
Why ſeek'ſt thou me? Could not this make thee know,
The hate I bare thee, made mee leaue thee ſo?
Her. You ſpeake not as you thinke: It cannot bee.
Hel. Lo: ſhe is one of this confederacy.
Now I perceiue, they haue conioynd all three,
To faſhion this falſe ſport, in ſpight of mee.
Iniurious *Hermia*, moſt vngratefull maide,
Haue you conſpir'd, haue you with theſe contriu'd
To baite mee, with this foule deriſion?
Is all the counſell that we two haue ſhar'd,
The ſiſters vowes, the howers that we haue ſpent,
When we haue chid the haſtie footed time,
For parting vs; O, is all forgot?
All ſchooldaies friendſhippe, childhood innocence?
VVee, *Hermia*, like two artificiall gods,

Haue with our needles, created both one flower,
Both on one ſampler, ſitting on one cuſhion,
Both warbling of one ſong, both in one key;
As if our hands, our ſides, voyces, and mindes
Had bin incorporate. So wee grewe together,
Like to a double cherry, ſeeming parted;
But yet an vnion in partition,
Two louely berries moulded on one ſtemme:
So with two ſeeming bodies, but one heart,
Two of the firſt life coats in heraldry,
Due but to one, and crowned with one creaſt.
And will you rent our auncient loue aſunder,
To ioyne with men, in ſcorning your poore friend?
It is not friendly, tis not maidenly.
Our ſex, as well as I, may chide you for it;
Though I alone doe fele the iniury.
Her. I am amazed at your words:
I ſcorne you not. It ſeemes that you ſcorne mee.
Hel. Haue you not ſet *Lyſander*, as in ſcorne,
To follow mee, and praiſe my eyes and face?
And made your other loue, *Demetrius*
(Who euen but now did ſpurne mee with his foote)
To call mee goddeſſe, nymph, diuine, and rare,
Pretious celeſtiall? VVherefore ſpeakes he this,
To her he hates? And wherfore doth *Lyſander*
Deny your loue (ſo rich within his ſoule)
And tender mee (forſooth) affection,
But by your ſetting on, by your conſent?
VVhat, though I be not ſo in grace as you,
So hung vpon with loue, ſo fortunate?
(But miſerable moſt, to loue vnlou'd)
This you ſhould pittie, rather then deſpiſe.
Her. I vnderſtand not, what you meane by this,
Hel. I doe. Perſeuer, counterfait ſad lookes:
Make mouthes vpon mee, when I turne my back:

Winke each at other, holde the ſweeete ieaſt vp.
This ſport well carried, ſhall bee chronicled.
If you haue any pitty, grace, or manners,
You would not make mee ſuch an argument.
But fare ye well: tis partly my owne fault:
Which death, or abſence ſoone ſhall remedy.
Lyſ. Stay, gentle *Helena*: heare my excuſe,
My loue, my life, my ſoule, faire *Helena*.
Hel. O excellent!
Herm. Sweete, doe not ſcorne her ſo.
Dem. If ſhe cannot entreat, I can compell.
Lyſ. Thou canſt compell no more, then ſhe intreat.
Thy threats haue no more ſtrength then her weake praiſe.
Helen, I loue thee, by my life I doe:
I ſweare by that which I will looſe for thee;
To prooue him falſe, that ſaies I loue thee not.
Dem. I ſay, I loue thee more then he can do.
Lyſ. If thou ſay ſo, withdrawe, and prooue it to.
Dem. Quick come.
Her. *Lyſander*, whereto tends all this?
Lyſ. Away, you *Ethiop*.
Dem. No, no: heele
Seeme to breake looſe: take on as you would follow;
But yet come not. You are a tame man, go.
Lyſ. Hang of thou cat, thou bur: vile thing let looſe;
Or I will ſhake thee from mee, like a ſerpent.
Her. Why are you growne ſo rude? What change is this,
Sweete loue?
Lyſ. Thy loue? Out tawny *Tartar*, out:
Out loathed medcine: ô hated potion hence.
Her. Doe you not ieaſt?
Hel. Yes ſooth: and ſo doe you.
Lyſ. *Demetrius*, I will keepe my word, with thee.
Dem. I would I had your bond. For I perceiue,
A weake bond holds you. Ile not truſt your word.

Lyſ.

Lyſ. What? ſhould I hurt her, ſtrike her, kill her dead?
Although I hate her, Ile not harme her ſo.
Her. What? Can you do me greater harme, then hate?
Hate mee, wherefore? O me, what newes, my loue?
Am not I *Hermia*? Are not you *Lyſander*?
I am as faire now, as I was ere while.
Since night, you lou'd mee; yet ſince night, you left mee,
Why then, you left mee (ô the gods forbid)
In earneſt, ſhall I ſay?
Lyſ I, by my life:
And neuer did deſire to ſee thee more.
Therefore be out of hope, of queſtion, of doubt:
Be certaine: nothing truer: tis no ieaſt
That I doe hate thee, and loue *Helena*.
Her. O mee, you iuggler, you canker bloſſome,
You theefe of loue: what, haue you come by night,
And ſtolne my loues heart, from him?
Hel. Fine, I faith.
Haue you no modeſty, no maiden ſhame,
No touch of baſhfulneſſe? What, will you teare
Impatient anſweres, from my gentle tongue?
Fy, fy, you counterfait, you puppet, you,
Her. Puppet? Why ſo? I, that way goes the game,
Now I perceiue that ſhe hath made compare,
Betweene our ſtatures, ſhe hath vrg'd her height,
And with her perſonage, her tall perſonage,
Her height (forſooth) ſhe hath preuaild with him.
And are you growne ſo high in his eſteeme,
Becauſe I am ſo dwarfiſh and ſo lowe?
How lowe am I, thou painted May-pole? Speake:
How lowe am I? I am not yet ſo lowe,
But that my nailes can reach vnto thine eyes.
Hel. I pray you, though you mocke me, gentleman,
Let her not hurt me, I was neuer curſt:
I haue no gift at all in ſhrewiſhneſſe:

I am a right maid, for my cowardize:
Let her not ſtrike mee. You perhaps, may thinke,
Becauſe ſhe is ſomething lower then my ſelfe,
That I can match her.
Her. Lower? harke againe.
Hel. Good *Hermia*, do not be ſo bitter with mee,
I euermore did loue you *Hermia*,
Did euer keepe your counſels, neuer wrongd you;
Saue that in loue, vnto *Demetrius*,
I told him of your ſtealth vnto this wood.
He followed you: for loue, I followed him.
But he hath chid me hence, and threatned mee
To ſtrike mee, ſpurne mee; nay to kill mee to,
And now, ſo you will let me quiet goe,
To *Athens* will I beare my folly backe,
And follow you no further. Let me goe.
You ſee how ſimple, and how fond I am.
Herm. Why? get you gon. Who iſt that hinders you?
Hel. A fooliſh heart, that I leaue here behind.
Her. What, with *Lyſander?*
Hel. With *Demetrius.*
Lyſ. Be not afraid: ſhe ſhall not harme thee *Helena.*
Deme. No ſir: ſhe ſhall not, though you take her part.
Hel. O, when ſhe is angry, ſhe is keene and ſhrewd,
She was a vixen, when ſhe went to ſchoole:
And though ſhe be but little, ſhe is fierce.
Her. Little againe? Nothing but low and little?
Why will you ſuffer her to floute me thus?
Let me come to her.
Lyſ. Get you gon, you dwarfe;
You *minimus*, of hindring knot graſſe, made;
You bead, you acorne.
Deme. You are too officious,
In her behalfe, that ſcornes your ſeruices.
Let her alone: ſpeake not of *Helena,*

Take

Take not her part. For if thou doſt intend
Neuer ſo little ſhewe of loue to her,
Thou ſhalt aby it.
Lyſ. Now ſhe holdes me not:
Now follow, if thou dar'ſt, to try whoſe right,
Of thine or mine, is moſt in *Helena*.
Deme. Follow? Nay: Ile go with thee, cheeke by iowle.
Her. You, miſtreſſe, all this coyle is long of you.
Nay: goe not backe.
Hel. I will not truſt you, I,
Nor longer ſtay in your curſt company.
Your hands, than mine, are quicker for a fray:
My legges are longer though, to runne away.
Her. I am amaz'd, and know not what to ſay. *Exeunt.*
Ob. This is thy negligence: ſtill thou miſtak'ſt,
Or elſe commitſt thy knaueries wilfully.
Puck. Beleeue mee, king of ſhadowes, I miſtooke.
Did not you tell mee, I ſhoud know the man.
By the *Athenian* garments, he had on?
And, ſo farr e blameleſſe prooues my enterpriſe,
That I haue nointed an *Athenians* eyes:
And ſo farre am I glad, it ſo did ſort,
As this their iangling I eſteeme a ſport.
Ob. Thou ſeeſt, theſe louers ſeeke a place to fight;
Hy therefore *Robin*, ouercaſt the night,
The ſtarry welkin couer thou anon,
With drooping fogge as blacke as *Acheron*,
And lead theſe teaſty Riuals ſo aſtray,
As one come not within anothers way.
Like to *Lyſander*, ſometime frame thy tongue:
Then ſtirre *Demetrius* vp, with bitter wrong:
And ſometime raile thou like *Demetrius*:
And from each other, looke thou lead them thus;
Till ore their browes, death-counterfaiting, ſleepe,
With leaden legs, and Batty wings doth creepe:

Then cruſh this hearbe into *Lyſanders* eye;
Whoſe liquor hath this vertuous property,
To take from thence all errour, with his might,
And make his eyebals roule with wonted ſight,
When they next wake, all this deriſion
Shall ſeeme a dreame, and fruiteleſſe viſion,
And backe to *Athens* ſhall the louers wend,
With league, whoſe date, till death ſhall neuer end,
Whiles I, in this affaire, doe thee imploy,
Ile to my Queene and beg her *Indian* boy:
And then I will her charmed eye releaſe
From monſters viewe, and all things ſhall be peace.
Puck. My Faiery Lord, this muſt be done with haſte.
For nights ſwift Dragons cut the clouds full faſt,
And yonder ſhines *Auroras* harbinger:
At whoſe approach, Ghoſts, wandring here and there,
Troope home to Churchyards: damned ſpirits all;
That in croſſe waies and floods haue buriall,
Already to their wormy beds are gone:
For feare leaſt day ſhould looke their ſhames vpon,
They wilfully themſelues exile from light,
And muſt for aye conſort with black browed night,
Ober. But we are ſpirits of another ſort,
I, with the mornings loue, haue oft made ſport,
And like a forreſter, the groues may tread
Euen till the Eaſterne gate all fiery red,
Opening on *Neptune*, with faire bleſſed beames,
Turnes, into yellow golde, his ſalt greene ſtreames,
But notwiſtanding, haſte, make no delay:
We may effect this buſineſſe, yet ere day.
Pu. Vp & down, vp & down, I will lead them vp & down.
I am feard in field & town. *Goblin*, lead them vp & downe.
Here comes one. *Enter* Lyſander.
Lyſ. Where art thou, proud *Demetrius*? Speak thou now,
Rob. Here villaine, drawne & ready. Where art thou?

Lyſ.

Lyſ. I will be with thee ſtraight.
Rob. Follow me then to plainer ground.
Enter Demetrius.
Deme. Lyſander, ſpeake againe,
Thou runaway, thou coward, art thou fled?
Speake in ſome buſh. Where doeſt thou hide thy head?
Rob. Thou coward art thou bragging, to the ſtarres,
Telling the buſhes that thou look'ſt for warres,
And wilt not come? Come recreant, come thou childe,
Ile whippe thee with a rodde. He is defil'd,
That drawes a ſword on thee.
De. Yea, art thou there?
Ro. Follow my voice: weele try no manhood here. *Exeũt.*
Lyſ. He goes before me, and ſtill dares me on:
When I come where he calles, then he is gon.
The villaine is much lighter heel'd then I;
I followed faſt: but faſter he did fly;
That fallen am I in darke vneauen way,
And here will reſt me. Come thou gentle day.
For if but once, thou ſhewe me thy gray light,
Ile finde *Demetrius*, and reuenge this ſpight.
Robin, *and* Demetrius.
Robi. Ho, ho, ho: Coward, why comſt thou not?
Deme. Abide me, if thou dar'ſt. For well I wot,
Thou runſt before mee, ſhifting euery place,
And dar'ſt not ſtand, nor looke me in the face.
Where art thou now?
Rob. Come hither: I am here.
De. Nay then thou mock'ſt me. Thou ſhat buy this dear,
If euer I thy face by day light ſee.
Now, goe thy way. Faintneſſe conſtraineth mee,
To meaſure, out my length, on this cold bed:
By daies approach looke to be viſited.
Enter Helena.
Hele. O weary night, O long and tedious night,

Abate thy houres, ſhine comforts, from the eaſt;
That I may backe to *Athens*, by day light,
From theſe that my poore company deteſt:
And ſleepe, that ſometimes ſhuts vp ſorrowes eye,
Steale mee a while from mine owne companie. *Sleepe.*
Rob. Yet but three? Come one more,
Two of both kindes makes vp foure.
Heare ſhee comes, curſt and ſadde.
Cupid is a knauiſh ladde,
Thus to make poore females madde.
Her. Neuer ſo weary, neuer ſo in woe,
Bedabbled with the deaw, and torne with briers:
I can no further crawle, no further goe:
My legges can keepe no paſe with my deſires.
Here will I reſt mee, till the breake of day:
Heauens ſhielde *Lyſander*, if they meane a fray.
Rob. On the ground, ſleepe ſound:
Ile apply your eye, gentle louer, remedy.
When thou wak'ſt, thou tak'ſt
True delight, in the ſight, of thy former ladies eye:
And the country prouerbe knowne,
That euery man ſhould take his owne,
In your waking ſhall be ſhowen,
Iacke ſhall haue *Iill*: nought ſhall goe ill:
The man ſhall haue his mare again, & all ſhall be well.

Enter Queene of Faieries, *and Clowne, and* Faieries: *and the king behinde them.*

Tita. Come ſit thee downe vpon this flowry bed,
While I thy amiable cheekes doe coy,
And ſtick muſk roſes in thy ſleeke ſmooth head,
And kiſſe thy faire large eares, my gentle ioy.
Clown. Where's *Peaſe-bloſſome?*
Pea. Ready.
Clow. Scratch my heade, *Peaſe-bloſſome.* Wher's Mounſicur *Cobweb?* *Cob.* Ready.

IV.i.

A Midſommer

Clo. Mounſieur *Cobweb*, good Mounſieur, get you your weapons in your hand, and kill me a red hipt Humble Bee, on the toppe of a thiſtle: and good Mounſieur, bring mee the hony bagge. Doe not fret your ſelfe too much, in the action, Mounſieur: and good Mounſieur haue a care, the honybagge breake not, I wold be loath to haue you ouerflowen with a honibag *ſignior*. Where's Mounſieur *Muſtardſeede*?

Muſt. Readie.

Clo. Giue me your neafe, Mounſieur *Muſtardſeede*. Pray you, leaue your curtſie, good Mounſieur,

Muſt. what's your will?

Clo. Nothing good Mounſieur, but to helpe Cauelery *Cobwebbe*, to ſcratch, I muſt to the Barbers, Mounſieur. For me thinkes I am maruailes hairy about the face, And I am ſuch a tender Aſſe, if my haire doe but tickle mee, I muſt ſcratch.

Tita. What, wilt thou heare ſome muſique, my ſweete loue?

Clo. I haue a reaſonable good eare in muſique. Lets haue the tongs, and the bones.

Tyta. Or, ſay ſweete loue, what thou deſireſt to eate.

Clo. Truely a pecke of prouander. I could mounch your good dry Oates. Me thinkes, I haue a great deſire to a bottle of hay. Good hay, ſweete hay hath no fellow. (hoord,

Ty. I haue a venturous Fairy, that ſhall ſeeke the Squirils And fetch thee newe nuts.

Clo. I had rather haue a handfull, or two of dryed peaſe. But, I pray you: let none of your people ſtirre me: I haue an expoſition of ſleepe come vpon mee,

Tyta. Sleepe thou, and I will winde thee in my armes, Faieries be gon, and be alwaies away.

So doth the woodbine, the ſweete Honiſuckle,
Gently entwiſt: the female Iuy ſo
Enrings the barky fingers of the Elme,

O now I loue thee! how I dote on thee!
Enter Robin goodfellow.
Ob. Welcome good *Robin*. Seeſt thou this ſweete ſight
Her dotage now I doe beginne to pittie.
For meeting her of late, behinde the wood,
Seeking ſweete fauours for this hatefull foole,
I did vpbraid her, and fall out with her.
For ſhe his hairy temples then had rounded,
With coronet offreſh and fragrant flowers.
And that ſame deawe which ſometime on the buddes,
Was wont to ſwell, like round and orient pearles;
Stood now within the pretty flouriets eyes,
Like teares, that did their owne diſgrace bewaile.
When I had, at my pleaſure, taunted her,
And ſhe, in milde termes, begd my patience,
I then did aske of her, her changeling childe:
Which ſtraight ſhe gaue mee, and her Fairy ſent
To beare him, to my bower, in Fairie land.
And now I haue the boy, I will vndoe
This hatefull imperfection of her eyes.
And, gentle *Puck*, take this transformed ſcalpe,
From of the heade of this *Athenian* ſwaine;
That hee, awaking when the other do,
May all to *Athens* backe againe repaire,
And thinke no more of this nights accidents,
But as the fearce vexation of a dreame.
But firſt I will releaſe the Fairy Queene.
Be, as thou waſt wont to bee:
See, as thou waſt wont to ſee.
Dians budde, or *Cupids* flower,
Hath ſuch force, and bleſſed power.
Now, my *Titania*, wake you, my ſweete Queene.
Tita. My *Oberon*, what viſions haue I ſeene!
Me thought I was enamourd of an Aſſe.
Ob. There lyes your loue.

Tita.

Tita. How came theſe things to paſſe?
O, how mine eyes doe loath his viſage now!
Ob. Silence a while. *Robin*, take off this head:
Titania, muſicke call, and ſtrike more dead
Then common ſleepe: of all theſe, fine the ſenſe.
Ti. Muſick, howe muſick: ſuch as charmeth ſleepe. (peepe,
Rob. Now, when thou wak'ſt, with thine own fools eyes
Ob. Sound Muſick: come, my queen, take hands with me,
And rocke the ground whereon theſe ſleepers be.
Now, thou and I are new in amitie,
And will to morrow midnight, ſolemnely
Daunce, in Duke *Theſeus* houſe triumphantly,
And bleſſe it to all faire proſperitie.
There ſhall the paires of faithfull louers be
Wedded, with *Theſeus*, all in iollitie.
Rob. Fairy King, attend, and marke:
I do heare the morning Larke.
Ob. Then my Queene, in ſilence ſad,
Trippe we after nights ſhade:
We, the Globe, can compaſſe ſoone,
Swifter then the wandring Moone.
Tita. Come my Lord, and in our flight,
Tell me how it came this night,
That I ſleeping here was found,
With theſe mortals on the ground. *Exeunt.*
Enter Theſeus *and all his traine.* *VVinde horne,*
The. Goe one of you, finde out the forreſter:
For now our obſeruation is performde.
And ſince we haue the vaward of the day,
My loue ſhall heare the muſicke of my hounds.
Vncouple, in the weſterne vallie, let them goe:
Diſpatch I ſay, and finde the forreſter,
Wee will, faire Queene, vp to the mountaines toppe,
And marke the muſicall confuſion
Of hounds and Echo in coniunction.

Hip. I was with *Hercules* and *Cadmus*, once,
When in a wood of *Creete* they bayed the Beare,
With hounds of *Sparta*: neuer did I heare
Such gallant chiding. For beſides the groues,
The skyes, the fountaines, euery region neare
Seeme all one mutuall cry. I neuer heard
So muſicall a diſcord, ſuch ſweete thunder.
Theſ. My hounds are bred out of the *Spartane* kinde:
So flew'd, ſo ſanded: and their heads are hung
With eares, that ſweepe away the morning deawe,
Crooke kneed, and dewlapt, like *Theſſalian* Buls:
Slowe in purſuit; but matcht in mouth like bels,
Each vnder each. A cry more tunable
Was neuer hollowd to, nor cheerd with horne,
In *Creete*, in *Sparta*, nor in *Theſſaly*.
Iudge when you heare. But ſoft. What nymphes are theſe?
Egeus. My Lord, this my daughter heere a ſleepe,
And this *Lyſander*, this *Demetrius* is,
This *Helena*, old *Nedars Helena*.
I wonder of their being here together.
The. No doubt, they roſe vp earely, to obſerue
The right of May: and hearing our intent,
Came heere, in grace of our ſolemnitie.
But ſpeake, *Egeus*, is not this the day,
That *Hermia* ſhould giue anſwer of her choyce?
Egeus. It is, my Lord.
Theſe. Goe, bid the huntſmen wake them with their
Shoute within: they all ſtart vp. Winde hornes.
The. Good morrow, friends. Saint *Valentine* is paſt.
Begin theſe woodbirds but to couple, now?
Lyſ. Pardon, my Lord.
The. I pray you all, ſtand vp.
I know, you two are Riuall enemies.
How comes this gentle concord in the worlde,
That hatred is ſo farre from iealouſie,

To

To ſleepe by hate, and feare no enmitie,
Lyſ. My Lord, I ſhal reply amazedly,
Halfe ſleepe, halfe waking. But, as yet. I ſweare,
I cannot truely ſay how I came here.
But as I thinke (for truely would I ſpeake)
And now I doe bethinke mee, ſo it is;
I came with *Hermia*, hither. Our intent
Was to be gon from *Athens*: where we might
Without the perill of the *Athenian* lawe,
Ege. Enough, enough my Lord: you haue enough.
I begge the law, the law, vpon his head:
They would haue ſtolne away, they would, *Demetrius*,
Thereby to haue defeated you and mee:
You of your wife, and mee, of my conſent:
Of my conſent, that ſhe ſhould be your wife.
Deme. My Lord, faire *Helen* told me of their ſtealth,
Of this their purpoſe hither, to this wood,
And I in fury hither followed them;
Faire *Helena*, in fancy following mee.
But my good Lord, I wote not by what power
(But by ſome power it is) my loue,
To *Hermia* (melted as the ſnowe)
Seemes to me now as the remembrance of an idle gaude,
Which in my childehoode I did dote vpon:
And all the faith, the vertue of my heart,
The obiect and the pleaſure of mine eye,
Is only *Helena*. To her, my Lord,
Was I betrothed, ere I ſee *Hermia*:
But, like a ſickneſſe, did I loath this foode.
But, as in health, come to my naturall taſte,
Now I doe wiſh it, loue it, long for it,
And will for euermore be true to it.
The. Faire louers, you are fortunately met,
Of this diſcourſe, we more will here anon.

Midsummer Nights dreame.

Egeus, I will ouerbeare your will:
For in the Temple, by and by, with vs,
These couples shall eternally be knit.
And, for the morning now is something worne,
Our purpos'd hunting shall be set aside.
Away, with vs, to *Athens*. Three and three,
Weele holde a feast, in great solemnitie. Come *Hyppolita*.
Deme, These things seeme small and vndistinguishable,
Like farre off mountaines turned into clouds.
Her. Me thinks I see these things, with parted eye,
When euery thing seemes double.
Hel. So mee thinkes:
And I haue found *Demetrius*, like a iewell,
Mine owne, and not mine owne.
Dem. Are you sure
That we are awake? It seemes to me,
That yet we sleepe, we dreame Do not you thinke,
The Duke was here, and bid vs follow him?
Her. Yea, and my father.
Hel. And *Hyppolita*.
Lys. And he did bid vs follow to the Temple.
Dem. Why then, we are awake: lets follow him, and by the way lets recount our dreames.
Clo. When my cue comes, call mee, and I will answere. My next is, most faire *Pyramus*, Hey ho. *Peeter Quince? Flute*, the bellowes menders *Snout* the tinker? *Starueling?* Gods my life! Stolne hence, and left mee a sleepe? I haue had a most rare vision. I haue had a dreame, past the wit of man, to say; what dreame it was. Man is but an Asse, if hee goe about expound this dreame. Me thought I was, there is no man can tell what. Me thought I was, and me thought I had. But man is but patcht a foole, If hee will offer to say, what mee thought I had. The eye of man hath not heard, the eare of man hath not seene, mans hand

hand is not able to taſte, his tongue to conceiue, nor his hearte to report, what my dreame was, I will get *Peter Quince* to write a Ballet of this dreame: it ſhall be call'd *Bottoms Dreame*; becauſe it hath no bottome: and I will ſing it in the latter end of a Play, before the Duke. Peraduenture, to make it the more gratious, I ſhall ſing it at her death.

IV.ii.

Enter Quince, Flute, Thisby *and the rabble.*

Quin. Haue you ſent to *Bottoms* houſe? Is he come home, yet?

Flut. Hee cannot be heard of, Out of doubt he is tranſported.

Thyſ. If hee come not, then the Play is mard. It goes not forward. Doth it?

Quin. It is not poſſible. You haue not a man, in all *Athens*, able to diſcharge *Pyramus*, but he.

Thyſ. No, hee hath ſimply the beſt wit of any handy-craft man, in *Athens*.

Quin. Yea, and the beſt perſon to, and hee is a very Paramour, for a ſweete voice.

Thiſ. You muſt ſay, Paragon. A Paramour is (God bleſſe vs) a thing of nought,

Enter Snug, *the Ioyner.*

Snug. Maſters, the Duke is comming from the Temple, and there is two or three Lords and Ladies more married. If our ſport had gon forward, wee had all beene made men,

Thyſ. O ſweete bully *Bottome*. Thus hath hee loſt ſixpence a day, during his life: hee coulde not haue ſcaped ſixe pence a day. And the Duke had not giuen him ſix pence a day, for playing *Pyramus*, Ile be hanged. He would haue deſerued it, Six pence a day, in *Pyramus*,

or nothing.

Enter Bottom.

Bot. Where are these lads? Where are these harts?

Quin, Bottom, ô most couragious day! O most happy houre!

Bott. Masters, I am to discourse wonders: but aske me not what. For if I tell you, I am not true *Athenian.* I will tell you euery thing right as it fell out.

Quin. Let vs heare, sweete *Bottom.*

Bot. Not a word of mee. All that I will tell you, is, that the Duke hath dined. Get your apparrell together, good strings to your beardes, new ribands to your pumpes, meete presently at the palace, euery man looke ore his part. For, the short and the long is, our play is preferd. In any case let *Thisby* haue cleane linnen: and let not him, that plaies the Lyon, pare his nailes: for they shall hang out for the Lyons clawes. And most deare Actors, eate no Onions, nor garlicke: for we are to vtter sweete breath: and I do not doubt but to hear them say, it is a sweete Comedy. No more wordes. Away, go away.

Enter Theseus, Hyppolita, *and* Philostrate. V.i.

Hip. Tis strange, my *Theseus*, that these louers speake of.

The. More straunge then true. I neuer may beleeue
These antique fables, nor these Fairy toyes.
Louers, and mad men haue such seething braines,
Such shaping phantasies, that apprehend more,
Then coole reason euer comprehends. The lunatick,
The louer, and the Poet are of imagination all compact.
One sees more diuels, then vast hell can holde:
That is the mad man. The louer, all as frantick,
Sees *Helens* beauty in a brow of *Ægypt.*
The Poets eye, in a fine frenzy, rolling, doth glance
From heauen to earth, from earth to heauen. And as
Imagination bodies forth the formes of things

Vn-

Vnknowne: the Poets penne turnes them to shapes,
And giues to ayery nothing, a locall habitation,
And a name. Such trickes hath strong imagination,
That if it would but apprehend some ioy,
It comprehends some bringer of that ioy.
Or in the night, imagining some feare,
How easie is a bush suppos'd a Beare?

Hyp. But, all the story of the night told ouer,
And all their minds transfigur'd so together,
More witnesseth than fancies images,
And growes to something of great constancy:
But howsoeuer, strange and admirable.

Enter Louers; Lysander, Demetrius, Hermia *and* Helena.

The. Here come the louers, full of ioy and mirth.
Ioy, gentle friends, ioy and fresh daies
Of loue accompany your hearts.

Lys. More then to vs, waite in your royall walkes, your boorde, your bedde.

The. Come now: what maskes, what daunces shall wee
To weare away this long age of three hours, betweene
Or after supper, & bed-time? Where is our vsuall manager
Of mirth? What Reuels are in hand? Is there no play,
To ease the anguish of a torturing hower? Call *Philostrate.*

Philostrate. Here mighty *Theseus.*

The. Say, what abridgement haue you for this euening?
What maske, what musicke? How shall we beguile
The lazy tyme, if not with some delight?

Philost. There is a briefe, how many sports are ripe.
Make choyce, of which your Highnesse will see first.

The. The battell with the *Centaures* to be sung,
By an *Athenian* Eunuche, to the Harpe?
Wee le none of that, That haue I tolde my loue,
In glory of my kinsman *Hercules.*
The ryot of the tipsie *Bachanals,*

A Midsommer nights dreame.

Tearing the *Thracian* singer, in their rage?
That is an olde deuise: and it was plaid,
When I from *Thebes* came last a conquerer.
The thrise three Muses, mourning for the death
Of learning, late deceast, in beggery?
That is some *Satire* keene and critticall,
Not sorting with a nuptiall ceremony.
A tedious briefe Scene of young *Pyramus*
And his loue *Thisby*; very tragicall mirth?
Merry, and tragicall? Tedious, and briefe? That is hot Ise,
And wodrous strange snow. How shall we find the cõcord
Of this discord?

Philost. A Play there is, my Lord, some ten words long;
Which is as briefe, as I haue knowne a play:
But, by ten words, my Lord it is too long:
Which makes it tedious. For in all the Play,
There is not one word apt, one player fitted.
And tragicall, my noble Lord, it is. For *Pyramus*,
Therein, doth kill himselfe. Which when I saw
Rehearst, I must confesse, made mine eyes water;
But more merry teares the passion of loud laughter
Neuer shed.

Thes. What are they, that doe play it?

Phil. Hard handed men, that worke in *Athens* here,
Which neuer labour'd in their minds till now:
And now haue toyled their vnbreathed memories,
With this same Play, against your nuptiall.

The. And wee will heare it.

Phi. No, my noble Lord, it is not for you. I haue heard
It ouer, and it is nothing, nothing in the world;
Vnlesse you can finde sport in their entents,
Extreamely stretcht, and cond with cruell paine,
To do you seruice.

The. I will heare that play. For neuer any thing
Can be amisse, when simplenesse and duety tender it.

Goe

Goe bring them in, and take your places, Ladies.
Hip. I loue not to ſee wretchedneſſe orecharged;
And duety, in his ſeruice, periſhing.
The. Why, gentle ſweete, you ſhall ſee no ſuch thing.
Hip. He ſayes, they can doe nothing in this kinde.
The. The kinder we, to giue them thanks, for nothing.
Our ſport ſhall be, to take what they miſtake.
And what poore duty cannot doe, noble reſpect
Takes it in might, not merit.
Where I haue come, great Clerkes haue purpoſed
To greete me, with premeditated welcomes;
Where I haue ſeene them ſhiuer and looke pale,
Make periods in the midſt of ſentences,
Throttle their practiz'd accent in their feares,
And in concluſion dumbly haue broke off,
Not paying mee a welcome. Truſt me, ſweete,
Out of this ſilence, yet, I pickt a welcome:
And in the modeſty of fearefull duty,
I read as much, as from the rattling tongue
Of ſaucy and audacious eloquence.
Loue, therefore, and tong-tide ſimplicity,
In leaſt, ſpeake moſt, to my capacity.
Philoſt. So pleaſe your Grace, the Prologue is addreſt,
Duk. Let him approach.

Enter the Prologue.

Pro. If wee offend, it is with our good will.
That you ſhould thinke, we come not to offend,
But with good will. To ſhew our ſimple skill,
That is the true beginning of our end.
Conſider then, we come but in deſpight.
We doe not come, as minding to content you,
Our true intent is. All for your delight,
Wee are not here. That you ſhould here repent you,
The Actors are at hand: and, by their ſhowe,
You ſhall know all, that you are like to knowe,

The. This fellow doth not ſtand vpon points.

Lyſ. He hath ridhis Prologue, like a rough Colte : hee knowes not the ſtoppe. A good moral! my Lord. It is not enough to ſpeake ; but to ſpeake true.

Hyp. Indeed he hath plaid on this Prologue, like a child on a Recorder, a ſound; but not in gouernement.

The. His ſpeach was like a tangled Chaine; nothing impaired, but all diſordered. Who is next?

Enter Pyramus, *and* Thisby, *and* Wall, *ana* Moone-ſhine, *and* Lyon.

Prologue. Gentles, perchance you wonder at this ſhow
But, wonder on, till truthe make all things plaine.
This man is *Pyramus*, if you would knowe:
This beautious Lady *Thiſby* is certaine.
This man, with lyme and rough caſt, doth preſent
Wall, that vile wall, which did theſe louers ſunder:
And through wals chinke, poore ſoules, they are content
To whiſper. At the which, let no man wonder.
This man, with lanterne, dogge, and buſh of thorne,
Preſenteth moone-ſhine. For if you will know,
By moone-ſhine did theſe louers thinke no ſcorne
To meete at *Ninus* tombe, there, there to wooe:
This grizly beaſt (which Lyon hight by name)
The truſty *Thyſby*, comming firſt by night,
Did ſcarre away, or rather did affright:
And as ſhe fled, her mantle ſhe did fall:
Which Lyon vile with bloody mouth did ſtaine.
Anon comes *Pyramus*, ſweete youth, and tall,
And findes his truſty *Thiſbyes* mantle ſlaine:
Whereat, with blade, with bloody blamefull blade,
He brauely broacht his boyling bloody breaſt.
And *Thiſby*, tarying in Mulberry ſhade,
His dagger drewe, and dyed. For all the reſt,
Let *Lyon*, *Moone-ſhine*, *Wall*, and louers twaine,
At large diſcourſe, while here they doe remaine.

The.

The. I wonder, if the Lyon be to ſpeake.

Demet. No wonder, my Lord. One Lyon may, when many Aſſes doe.

Exit Lyon, Thysby, *and* Mooneſhine.

Wall. In this ſame enterlude it doth befall,
That I, one *Flute* (by name) preſent a wall:
And ſuch a wall, as I would haue you thinke
That had in it a cranied hole or chinke:
Through which the louers, *Pyramus*, and *Thisby*,
Did whiſper often, very ſecretly.
This lome, this roughcaſt, and this ſtone doth ſhowe,
That I am that ſame wall: the truth is ſo.
And this the cranie is, right and ſiniſter,
Through which the fearefull louers are to whiſper.

The. Would you deſire lime and haire to ſpeake better?

Deme. It is the wittieſt partition, that euer I heard diſcourſe, my Lord.

The. *Pyramus* drawes neare the wall: ſilence.

Py. O grim lookt night, o night, with hue ſo blacke,
O night, which euer art, when day is not:
O night, O night, alacke, alacke, alacke,
I feare my *Thisbyes* promiſe is forgot.
And thou ô wall, ô ſweete, ô louely wall,
That ſtandſt betweene her fathers ground and mine,
Thou wall, ô wall, O ſweete and louely wall,
Showe mee thy chinke, to blink through, with mine eyne,
Thankes curteous wall. *Ioue* ſhield thee well, for this.
But what ſee I? No *Thiſby* doe I ſee.
O wicked wall, through whome I ſee no bliſſe,
Curſt be thy ſtones, for thus deceiuing mee,

The. The wall mee thinkes, being ſenſible, ſhould curſe againe.

Pyr No, in truth Sir, he ſhould not. *Deceiuing mee* is *Thiſbyes* cue: ſhe is to enter now, and I am to ſpy
Her through the wall. You ſhall ſee it will fall

Pat as I told you: yonder ſhe comes. *Enter* Thiſby.
Thiſ. O wall, full often haſt thou heard my mones,
For parting my faire *Pyramus*, and mee.
My cherry lips haue often kiſt thy ſtones;
Thy ſtones, with lime and hayre knit now againe.
Pyra. I ſee a voice: now will I to the chinke,
To ſpy and I can heare my *Thiſbyes* face. Thyſby?
Thiſ. My loue thou art, my loue I thinke.
Py. Thinke what thou wilt, I am thy louers Grace:
And, like *Limander*, am I truſty ſtill,
Thiſ. And I, like *Helen*, till the fates me kill,
Pyra. Not *Shafalus*, to *Procrus*, was ſo true.
Thiſ. As *Shafalus* to *Procrus*, I to you.
Pyr. O kiſſe mee, through the hole of this vilde wall.
Thiſ. I kiſſe the walles hole; not your lips at all.
Pyr. Wilt thou, at *Ninnies* tombe, meete me ſtraight way?
Thy. Tide life, tyde death, I come without delay.
Wal. Thus haue I, *Wall*, my part diſcharged ſo;
And, being done, thus wall away doth goe.
Duk. Now is the Moon vſed between the two neighbors.
Deme. No remedy, my Lord, when wals are ſo wilfull, to heare without warning.
Dutch. This is the ſillieſt ſtuffe, that euer I heard.
Duke. The beſt, in this kinde, are but ſhadowes: and the worſt are no worſe, if imagination amend them.
Dutch. It muſt be your imagination, then; & not theirs.
Duke. If we imagine no worſe of them, then they of thẽſelues, they may paſſe for excellent men. Here come two noble beaſts, in a man and a Lyon.
Enter Lyon, *and* Moone-ſhine.
Lyon. You Ladies, you (whoſe gentle hearts do feare
The ſmalleſt monſtrous mouſe, that creepes on floore)
May now, perchance, both quake and tremble here,
When Lyon rough, in wildeſt rage, doth roare.
Then know that I, as *Snug* the ioyner am

A Lyon fell, nor elſe no Lyons damme,
For, if I ſhould, as Lyon, come in ſtrife,
Into this place, 'twere pitty on my life.

Duk. A very gentle beaſt, and of a good conſcience.

Deme. The very beſt at a beaſt, my Lord, that ere I ſaw.

Lyſ. This Lyon is a very fox, for his valour.

Duk. True: and a gooſe for his diſcretion.

De. Not ſo my Lord. For his valour cannot carry his diſcretion: and the fox carries the gooſe.

Duk. His diſcretion, I am ſure, cannot carry his valour. For the gooſe carries not the fox. It is well: leaue it to his diſcretion, and let vs liſten to the Moone.

Moone. This lanthorne doth the horned moone preſent.

Deme. He ſhould haue worne the hornes, on his head.

Duk. He is no creſcent, and his hornes are inuiſible, within the circumference.

Moone. This lanthorne doth the horned moone preſent,
My ſelfe, the man ith Moone, doe ſeeme to be.

Duke. This is the greateſt errour of all the reſt; the man ſhould be put into the lanthorne. How is it elſe the man ith Moone?

Deme. He dares not come there, for the candle. For, you ſee, it is already in ſnuffe. (change.

Dutch. I am aweary of this Moone. Would hee would

Duke. It appeares, by his ſmall light of diſcretion, that hee is in the wane: but yet in curteſie, in all reaſon, wee muſt ſtay the time.

Lyſan. Proceede, Moone.

Moon. All that I haue to ſay, is to tell you, that the lanthorne is the Moone, I the man ith Moone, this thorne buſh my thorne buſh, and this dogge my dogge.

Deme. Why? All theſe ſhould be in the lanthorne: for all theſe are in the Moone. But ſilence: here comes *Thiſby*.

Enter Thiſby.

Th. This is ould *Ninies* tumbe. Where is my loue? *Lyon.* Oh.

Dem. Well roard, Lyon.
Duke. Well runne, *Thiſby.*
Dutcheſſe. Well ſhone *Moone.* Truly, the Moone ſhines, with a good grace.
Duk. Well mouz'd, *Lyon,*
Dem. And then came *Pyramus.*
Lyſ. And ſo the Lyon vaniſht.

Enter Pyramus.

Pyr Sweete Moone, I thanke thee, for thy ſunny beams.
I thanke thee, Moone, for ſhining now ſo bright.
For by thy gratious golden, glittering beames,
I truſt to take of trueſt *Thiſby* ſight.
But ſtay: ô ſpight! but marke, poore knight,
What dreadfull dole is here?
Eyes do you ſee! How can it bee!
O dainty duck, o deare!
Thy mantle good, what, ſtaind with blood?
Approach ye Furies fell,
O fates come, come, cut thread and thrumme,
Quaile, cruſh, conclude, and quell.
Duke. This paſſion, & the death of a deare friend would goe neere to make a man looke ſad.
Dutch. Beſhrewe my heart, but I pitty the man.
Pyr. O, wherefore, Nature, didſt thou Lyons frame?
Since Lyon vilde hath here deflour'd my deare.
Which is, no, no: which was the faireſt dame
That liu'd, that lou'd, that lik't, that look't with cheere.
Come teares, confound, out ſword, and wound
The pappe of *Pyramus*:
I, that left pappe, where heart doth hoppe.
Thus dy I, thus, thus, thus.
Now am I dead, now am I fled, my ſoule is in the sky.
Tongue looſe thy light, Moone take thy flight,
Now dy, dy, dy, dy, dy.
Dem. No Die, but an ace for him. For he is but one,

Lyſ.

Lyſ. Leſſe then an ace, man. For he is dead, he is nothing.

Duke. With the helpe of a Surgeon, he might yet recouer, and yet prooue an Aſſe.

Dut. How chance Moone-ſhine is gone before? *Thiſby* comes backe, and findes her louer,

Duk. Shee will finde him, by ſtarre-light. Here ſhee comes, and her paſſion ends the Play.

Dus. Methinkes, ſhe ſhould not vſe a long one, for ſuch a *Pyramus*: I hope, ſhe will be briefe.

Demet. A moth will turne the ballance; which *Pyramus*, which *Thisby* is the better: he for a man; God warnd vs: ſhe, for a woman; God bleſſe vs.

Lyſ. She hath ſpied him already, with thoſe ſweete eyes.

Deme. And thus ſhe meanes, *videlicet*;

This. Aſleepe my loue? What, dead my doue?
O *Pyramus*, ariſe,
Speake, ſpeake. Quite dumbe? Dead, dead? A tumbe
Muſt couer thy ſweete eyes.
Theſe lilly lippes, this cherry noſe,
Theſe yellow cowſlippe cheekes
Are gon, are gon: louers make mone:
His eyes were greene, as leekes,
O ſiſters three, come, come, to mee,
With hands as pale as milke,
Lay them in gore, ſince you haue ſhore
With ſheeres, his threede of ſilke.
Tongue, not a word: come truſty ſword,
Come blade, my breaſt imbrew:
And farewell friends: thus *Thyſby* ends:
Adieu, adieu, adieu.

Duke. *Moone-ſhine* and *Lyon* are left to bury the dead.

Deme. I, and *Wall* to.

Lyon. No, I aſſure you, the wall is downe, that parted their fathers. Will it pleaſe you, to ſee the Epilogue, or to heare a Bergomaske daunce, between two of our cõpany?

A Midſommer nights dreame.

Duke. No Epilogue, I pray you. For your Play needs no excuſe. Neuer excuſe: For when the Players are all deade, there needs none to be blamed. Mary, if hee that writ it, had played *Pyramus*, and hangd himſelfe in *Thiſbies* garter, it would haue beene a fine Tragedy: and ſo it is truely, and very notably diſcharg'd. But come your Burgomaske: let your Epilogue alone.

The iron tongue of midnight hath tolde twelue.
Louers to bed, tis almoſt Fairy time.
I feare we ſhall outſleepe the comming morne,
As much as wee this night haue ouerwatcht.
This palpable groſſe Play hath well beguil'd
The heauie gate of night. Sweete friends, to bed.
A fortnight holde we this ſolemnitie,
In nightly Reuels, and new iollity. *Exeunt.*

Enter Pucke.

Puck. Now the hungry Lyons roares.
And the wolfe beholds the Moone;
Whilſt the heauie ploughman ſnores,
All with weary taske foredoone.
Now the waſted brands doe glowe,
Whilſt the ſcriech-owle, ſcriechinglowd,
Puts the wretch, that lyes in woe,
In remembrance of a ſhrowde.
Now it is the time of night,
That the graues, all gaping wide,
Euery one lets forth his ſpright,
In the Churchway paths to glide.
And wee Fairies, that doe runne,
By the triple *Hecates* teame,
From the preſence of the Sunne,
Following darkeneſſe like a dreame,
Now are frollick: not a mouſe
Shall diſturbe this hallowed houſe.
I am ſent, with broome, before,

To

To ſweepe the duſt, behinde the dore.

Enter King and Queene of Fairies, with all their traine.

Ob. through the houſe giue glimmering light,
By the dead and drowſie fier,
Euery Elfe and Fairy ſpright,
Hop as light as birde from brier,
And this dittie after mee, Sing, and daunce it trippingly.

Tita. Firſt rehearſe your ſong by rote,
To each word a warbling note.
Hand in hand, with Fairy grace,
Will we ſing and bleſſe this place.

Ob. Now, vntill the breake of day,
Through this houſe, each Fairy ſtray.
To the beſt bride bed will wee:
Which by vs ſhall bleſſed be:
And the iſſue, there create,
Euer ſhall be fortunate:
So ſhall all the couples three
Euer true in louing be:
And the blots of natures hand
Shall not in their iſſue ſtand.
Neuer mole, hare-lippe, nor ſcarre,
Nor marke prodigious, ſuch as are
Deſpiſed in natiuitie,
Shall vpon their children be.
With this field deaw conſecrate,
Euery Fairy take his gate,
And each ſeuerall chamber bleſſe,
Through this palace, with ſweete peace,
Euer ſhall in ſafety reſt,
And the owner of it bleſt.
Trippe away: make no ſtay:
Meete me all, by breake of day. *Exeunt.*

Robin. If we ſhadowes haue offended,
Thinke but this (and all is mended)

A Midſommer nightes dreame.

That you haue but ſlumbred here,
While theſe viſions did appeare.
And this weake and idle theame,
No more yielding but a dreame,
Gentles, doe not reprehend.
If you pardon, wee will mend.
And, as I am an honeſt *Puck*,
If we haue vnearned luck,
Now to ſcape the Serpents tongue,
We will make amends, ere long:
Elſe, the *Puck* a lyer call.
So, good night vnto you all.
Giue me your hands, if we be friends:
And *Robin* ſhall reſtore amends.

FINIS.

BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY
3 9999 06561 184 8